THE

LETTERS

OF A

SOLITARY WANDERER:

CONTAINING

NARRATIVES

OF

VARIOUS DESCRIPTIONS.

By CHARLOTTE SMITH.

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LETTERS, &c.

YOU agree with me, my friend, in lamenting the evils which the ſuperſtitious folly of mankind has in ſo many inſtances brought upon them. Yet you ſeem to doubt whether the extraordinary calamities which I have related, as having befallen the family of Falconberg, are to be imputed ſolely to that cauſe. You ſay, Sir Mordaunt's inſanity, and not his prejudices, was the chief ſource of thoſe calamities. But is there not every reaſon to believe that his derangement of mind was occaſioned by his bigotry, and that the men to whom he gave up the little underſtanding he ever poſſeſſed, found, that by influenc-

ing and irritating a diſpoſition naturally ſelfiſh, violent, and ſuſpicious, they ſhould have the power to detach him from all thoſe affections which humanize the heart, and obtain ſuch a command over him as would throw his large property into their hands? How well they ſucceeded my narrative has declared. You are, however, a little diſpoſed, I ſee, to cavil at the probability of my ſtory. My good friend, is there any thing impoſſible in it? Unleſs there be, ſuſpend awhile your deſire to criticiſe its probabilities; and recollect how many ſtrange things both you and I (whoſe ages together make not half a century) have ſeen, which had we read of, or been told of them, a few years ago, we ſhould have conſidered as the viſions of a diſordered imagination.

Believe, for it is true, that Miſs Falconberg ſtill exiſts, or did very lately exiſt, in the neighbourhood of Florence; where, for aught I know, I may one day

or other be tempted to ſeek her, and, like a wandering knight of old times, liſten to the hiſtory of her ſorrows, told in her own intereſting words. Nay, do not begin to cry pſha! and pooh! and do not write to me another long lecture on eccentricity, or hint at a ſuſpicion that I ſeek a ſort of ſolitary fame, by thinking, or at leaſt acting, as no reaſonable man ever thought or acted before. I ſeek no fame. Of what value would it be to me, ſince I ſhould certainly never hear of it? Or wherefore ſhould I concern myſelf about opinions entertained of me by half a ſcore or half an hundred inſignificant people, who, five minutes after they have moſt dogmatically decided on my conduct, will forget my very exiſtence? You have aſked me, my friend, if, by my deſultory and wandering life, I expect to regain happineſs?— Happineſs? Alas! can any rational being ſay that he ever taſted it? I once, indeed, fondly believed it within

my graſp; but it is gone, fled for ever! —and now all I attempt is to make the life I muſt endure as tolerable as poſſible, and for this purpoſe I paſs whereever novelty or curioſity attract me. An author, who appears to me to have been one of the moſt illuſtrious men that any age or nation has produced, ſays, in one of his letters written towards the end of his life, that—to the end I aim at, "tout eſt bon, pourvu qu'on attrape le bout de la journée; qu'on ſoupe et qu'on dorme: le reſte eſt vanité des vanités, mais l'amitié eſt choſe véritable."

My life, whatever it may be to myſelf, is not however always uſeleſs to others; I have more than once met in my wanderings with thoſe whoſe ſorrows I had the power at leaſt to ſuſpend; while, by remarking the various miſeries of life, I have learned better to endure my own. I am now therefore going.——"Going?" you will impatiently aſk: "whither, and for

for what?" In truth, it is not always eaſy for me to anſwer thoſe queſtions; but now I rather, think, however, it will be northward; and from the north-weſtern coaſt of England, or from Scotland, you may perhaps hear from me again. I have ſome buſineſs at Liverpool, which I may as well do now as hereafter. It relates to accounts between my late father and a gentleman, the ſon of an old friend, who was ſent from Jamaica for education, and was ſome time his ward. They have been long ready, and the balance long ſince paid; but ſome trifling adjuſtment yet remains, for which he refers me to his merchant at Liverpool. It is lucky, you will ſay, that I find any reaſon for going to one place rather than another. I own I do want motive in general to exert myſelf at all. How ſad is the taſk of eſcaping from oneſelf!

LETTER II.

Liverpool.

I PASS over my journey from my late ſolitary abode to this buſy town, where every object is aſſembled that I diſlike the moſt, and where I certainly ſhould not have ſtaid three hours, had I not very unexpectedly found here the young man of whom I ſpoke in my laſt letter; and ſtill more unexpectedly diſcovered in him, after a very ſhort converſation, qualities of the heart and the underſtanding, which I hardly expected had ſurvived ſome years reſidence in Jamaica, and which made me wiſh to know more of him ſuch as he now is; for when we laſt parted we were both boys. He appeared happy to ſee the ſon of a man to whom he conſidered himſelf ſo much obliged.

obliged. My father had, he ſaid, been to him more than his own; and the gratitude and tenderneſs with which he ſpoke of his guardian would alone have attached me to him more than is uſual with me: but I found another reaſon to give up, at leaſt for awhile, what you call, and perhaps with reaſon, my gloomy eccentricities, when he introduced me to his wife, whom he married in Jamaica about two years ſince, and on whoſe account principally he came to England.

I know exactly the look you will put on when you read this part of my letter; but a truce, my friend, with your raillery till you hear why I found Mrs. Denbigh ſingularly intereſting and attractive. It was not her beauty, though ſhe is a remarkably delicate and pretty woman; for I can now behold the moſt dazzling beauty with indifference. It was not what are called accompliſhments, for with thoſe ſhe is not eminently

provided; but it was a ſort of tenderneſs of manner, without any of that affectation of peculiar ſoftneſs which has ſo often diſguſted me; a manner which is rather to be felt than deſcribed; and which perhaps, though it created in me a great degree of intereſt, might not have any effect on another. You may remember, that formerly, in our diſquiſitions on the characters and manners of women, I have frequently ridiculed the languid indolent ſtyle which ſome of them affect, and the trembling timidity which is ſo prettily put on by others. My friend's wife has a great deal of both theſe female faults; but they are, I am now convinced, the effect of ſome ſingular circumſtances of her life; and, knowing that, her languor is not repulſive, or her timidity diſguſting.

Denbigh and I had not been two days together before our former intimacy was renewed. He talked to me now of the affairs of his fortune juſt as he uſed to tell

tell me of his ſchool adventures; and, on ſome points where he found himſelf in doubts, conſulted me on his future proceedings. The moſt important of theſe was his deſign of ſelling his whole property in the Weſt Indies. "'Tis an hereditary eſtate," ſaid he, "and has belonged to my family ever ſince the firſt ſettlement of the iſland; but though I know, that from the utmoſt amount of the ſale, I ſhall not make any thing like the income it now brings me; yet I ſo extremely diſlike the nature of the property, that I ſhould, I think, determine to part with it, even if my wife's great averſion from reſiding there did not weigh ſo much with me, who cannot live without her; and know that reſidence alone on a plantation can make either the maſter rich, or his people contented."—"I thought," replied I, "that Mrs. Denbigh had been alſo a native of Jamaica, and had merely come to England, as you did, for education." He anſwered,

" She certainly was born there; but from a very early age was brought up in Europe, under the care of an aunt, a remarkably ſenſible woman, who, having been left early her own miſtreſs, found independence ſo much more deſirable than a matrimonial connection with any of thoſe who offered, that ſhe voluntarily became what is called an old maid; and taking her niece from ſchool before her mind was vitiated by the rivalry too common among all girls, and too much encouraged by the common mode of education, ſhe undertook to inſtruct her at home; but her plan for that purpoſe did not embrace numberleſs frivolous attempts at arts, which are nothing, if not obtained in perfection, but rather in uſeful acquirements, writing correctly her own language, underſtanding and ſpeaking Italian and French, and forming her taſte while the virtues of her heart were not forgotten. Mrs. Maynard, her aunt,

who piqued herſelf on ſtrength of mind ſuperior to her ſex, endeavoured to communicate the ſame diſdain of feminine weakneſs to her niece: but I think that my Henrietta has eſcaped the hardneſs of character which ſuch attempts frequently produce; and, perhaps being ſenſible a little too much of it in her aunt, has rather indulged the natural tendency of her mind to the oppoſite extreme.

Henrietta had never ſeen her father ſince her childhood: he was a man whoſe ideas had received all their colour from his ſituation. The only ſon of a very rich planter, he had never been in England ſince he left ſchool at ten years old, and had conceived ſuch an averſion from a place where he had been on the footing of equality with other boys, that he never deſired to reviſit Europe. From being a deſpot on his own eſtate, imagined he might exerciſe unbounded authority over every being that belonged

to him. But his ſiſter, as haughty in her way as he was in his, has always maintained her independence; and as ſhe had a very conſiderable fortune at her own diſpoſal, and was not likely to marry, he thought his daughter would be provided for by ſuffering her to continue with her aunt. He had a ſon by a ſecond wife, on whom all his affection was placed, and for whom all his fortune was, he thought, too little. By a variety of other women of every various ſhade, from the quadroon to the negro of the Gold coaſt, he had many other children, who were brought up by their mothers on his eſtates; and who, though not actually ſlaves, were conſidered as attached to the ſoil. The boys as they grew up became overſeers or accomptants; and ſome of the girls were received into the houſe, where, as it had no regular miſtreſs, (his ſecond wife being long ſince dead,) they held a ſort of middle place between the ſervants and the

the children of the houſe. Mr. James Denbigh, the young heir, had been recalled by his impatient father at about ſeventeen, and was ſome time unwillingly an inhabitant of Jamaica; but to be confined to any ſpot, or under even the queſtioning eye of his father, was what he could not reſolve upon. He paſſed almoſt all his time with the officers of the Engliſh regiments at that time ſtationed at Jamaica, and engaged deeply in their amuſements; where, in the midſt of his thoughtleſs diſſipation, he was attacked by the fever which has now for ſo many years been raging with fatal fury in America, and died before his father even knew that he was ill.

So fell at once all thoſe ſplendid viſions of continuing and aggrandizing his family, which had for years been the favourite contemplations of the elder Mr. Maynard. His temper, naturally violent and iraſcible, became after this diſappointment ſo tyrannic and intolerable, that thoſe

thoſe moſt accuſtomed to endure his brutal caprices found it almoſt impoſſible to continue with him. Imagine then, my friend, what muſt have been the ſituation of my poor Henrietta in the ſcenes ſhe was involved in. Her aunt, with whom ſhe had travelled for two years through France and Italy, had been at home only ſeven or eight months, when ſhe became frequently ſubject to a pulmonary complaint, which ſhe neglected; aſſuring Henrietta, who ſaw its progreſs with great uneaſineſs, that it would yield only to ſummer. It was, ſhe ſaid, uſeleſs to apply remedies which would be ineffectual; and ſhe projected, as ſoon as the ſpring arrived, a long tour northward, to end in a reſidence of ſix weeks in Wales, where ſhe perſuaded herſelf goat's milk and pure air would entirely reſtore her. During the winter ſhe became evidently worſe, yet ſtill looked forward to ſpring as a period which would renew her exiſtence. Spring indeed

deed came, but coldly and reluctantly; perpetual rain, or north-east winds, checked every effort of the approaching sun, and my poor Henrietta lost her aunt, her only friend and protectress: nor was she at all consoled by finding herself, at hardly twenty, mistress of a fortune of upwards of seventeen thousand pounds.

I had met with her and her aunt at Pezena's, when they were about to return to England; where when I arrived some months after them, I had renewed my acquaintance. Henrietta made at first a very favourable impression on my mind: our fortunes, our condition of life, and our ages, all seemed to unite in making an union between us desirable for both parties; but I had seen among my own friends two such striking examples of the unhappy consequences of early and hasty marriages, that I determined to see more of the fair Henrietta before I put my happiness in any degree in her power.

We

We parted therefore at that time without my having profeſſed any warmer ſentiment than friendſhip: and when our intercourſe was renewed in town, her aunt was in ſuch a ſtate of health, that Henrietta would, I found, have been offended, had I then named to her a paſſion which was now become the livelieſt ſentiment of my heart. It was, however, impoſſible to conceal what I yet feared to explain; till one evening, when I called with my uſual inquiry, and was admitted, I found Henrietta drowned in tears: ſobs choked her utterance, and her boſom heaved with convulſive agonies; while with difficulty ſhe repeated what the phyſician who attended her aunt had juſt told her, that he thought it impoſſible ſhe could ſurvive the week. Her grief was ſo affecting, her attendance on her dying relation had been ſo exemplary, that I loved her at that moment more paſſionately than ever; and I know not how, but I contrived to offer my

my protection as a husband, as the fondest and most adoring husband, when sorrow for the cruel event which I feared was inevitable, should permit her to look forward to the prospects of her future life. Henrietta was not ignorant of my attachment to her. Her aunt had perceived it with pleasure, and I now reproached myself for the needless reserve I had held. We soon came to a perfect understanding. Mrs. Maynard herself, trembling on the brink of the grave, joined our hands, and blessed us. She bade her beloved Henrietta look on me as her best friend, entrust me with the management of all her pecuniary concerns, and suffer no forms of mere custom to delay her giving me a right to be her friend and protector. Scarce had we performed the last offices to this respectable woman, when Henrietta received letters from her father's agent, informing her of the death of her brother, and his orders that she should immediately

mediately come over to Jamaica. To theſe were added two very ſhort and peremptory letters from her father himſelf, one addreſſed to his ſiſter now deceaſed, the other to his daughter, in both of which he expreſſed himſelf like a man who would be obeyed, without any attention to the feelings or inclinations of thoſe whom he thought he had a right to command.

Henrietta put theſe unwelcome mandates into my hand, and told me ſhe muſt prepare to obey them. I inſtantly perceived that my hopes of immediately calling her mine were conſiderably diminiſhed by this unexpected change, and dreaded leſt her father had views for her which might ſeparate us for ever. I communicated my fears to Henrietta: they were founded on what I had heard of her father's character, of which ſhe ſeemed more ignorant than I was; for Mrs. Maynard, however ſhe contemned her brother, had always reſpected the

duty

duty which her niece owed him, and had as much as ſhe could concealed from her his vicious character. Henrietta therefore heard me with aſtoniſhment when I told her that I foreſaw, if ſhe returned to Jamaica, our union would be deferred, if not broken for ever. She contended, that her father could not be ſo unreaſonable; that if, like the generality of fathers, fortune was his object, I was heir to, or already poſſeſſed, a property which was more than equal to hers; that in point of family and connections mine was infinitely ſuperior; and that it appeared to her almoſt impoſſible for her father to make any objection.

That ſuch was the flattering opinion of Henrietta was to me a misfortune; for it furniſhed her with arguments againſt what I ardently ſolicited—an immediate marriage. It was in vain I repreſented to her, that, firmly perſuaded as ſhe appeared to be of her father's concurrence,

currence, there would be no breach of duty in fulfilling the laſt wiſhes of her deceaſed friend, and marrying before ſhe obeyed her father's ſummons. She combated all I could ſay with arguments which I ſoon found were not her own; and I diſcovered with undeſcribable mortification, that ſhe was dictated to by one of thoſe officious people, who, having a very high opinion of their own wiſdom, delight in directing the conduct of others, and are never ſo happy as when they can buſy themſelves in affairs of which for the moſt part they can have only an incomplete knowledge. Artful, inſinuating, and ſpecious, Mrs. Apthorp, who had been an intimate friend of her aunt's, now uſed her utmoſt endeavours to preſerve the power which that title and her own art had given her over the mind of Henrietta. She had other views in doing ſo than merely to gratify her love of meddling and dictating; and ſhe ſucceeded but too well.

The

The nonage of Henrietta, and every other objection, was pleaded in ſupport of the reſolution which I found ſhe had taken of returning to Jamaica, and ſoliciting her father's conſent to our marriage. I then inſiſted upon accompanying her in the ſame veſſel; but I found her equally prepared with reaſons againſt that. Her cunning directreſs had foreſeen that I ſhould endeavour to obtain that proof of her regard, and had armed my poor Henrietta with ſo great a ſtore of prudiſh, and as I thought unneceſſary objections, that my patience was exhauſted; and for the firſt time ſince our acquaintance, I remonſtrated with ſome degree of aſperity againſt this miſtruſt of my honour, and theſe doubts of my real affection. Henrietta anſwered only by her tears; but her reſolution ſeemed unſhaken: and vexed beyond all endurance at the influence which I found an artful woman had obtained over ſo good an underſtanding as

Henrietta

Henrietta poſſeſſed, I was raſh enough to declare to her, that we muſt either go together, or part never to meet again. I left her in a temper of mind not eaſy to be deſcribed; but repenting, and even deteſting myſelf for the pain I had inflicted, I flew back to apologize, and to implore for pardon. Henrietta, however, was already gone to pour her ſorrows into the boſom of her friend, who knew ſo well how to inflame her naturally gentle temper, that, when I again ſought her the next day, ſhe was denied to me; and a few hours afterwards ſhe was carried into Hampſhire by her zealous and prudent monitreſs, whoſe aſcendancy ſeemed to increaſe as mine I thought declined. It was not difficult for me to find whither Henrietta was gone; and I followed her: but determined never to enter a houſe of which Mrs. Apthorp was the miſtreſs, I went to an inn in the village, and, by writing, at length engaged Henrietta to ſee me.

With-

Withdrawn from the immediate preſence of her officious directreſs, (who had perſuaded her that ſhe ſtood in the place of her deceaſed aunt as a guide to her conduct,) Henrietta wept, and forgave me: but I could obtain my pardon on no other terms than thoſe of relinquiſhing my reſolution to take my paſſage in the ſame veſſel. As the moſt impertinent affectation of prudery could not venture to object to my proceeding in another, I immediately went to Portſmouth, and engaged my paſſage in a ſloop, the only veſſel in which any tolerable accommodation was left for paſſengers; for the fleet was full of Weſt Indians, going to viſit or return to their property acroſs the Atlantic.

I then acquainted Henrietta with what I had done, and haſtened to London to ſettle ſome affairs which my father's death and that of your father had left upon my hands. I hurried them over, and flew back to Portſmouth, where I

was

was indeed permitted to attend my Henrietta into the ſhip which was to convey her from England: but imagine my ſurpriſe and vexation when I found that Mrs. Apthorp, whom I had ſo much reaſon to deteſt was to be her companion and protectreſs during the voyage! I expreſſed my aſtoniſhment the more forcibly, becauſe the company of this lady had been one of the expedients I had propoſed, when Henrietta objected to the impropriety of my accompanying her alone. I was then told, that notwithſtanding the very great affection of Mrs. Apthorp for her dear adopted child, her own family, to whom her firſt duties were due, could not diſpenſe with her preſence in England. I now found her in great form, ſharing the ſtate-rooms, as they are called, appropriated to Henrietta, in a ſhip of which her father was principal owner, and directing every thing with the air of a perſon whoſe judgment and ſagacity were to be

generally

generally referred to. The captain, a rude blunt ſeaman, who had very ſoon ſeen more of her than he liked, perceived, what indeed I had not affected to hide, that this woman was utterly hateful to me; and calling me aſide, he aſked me if I did not ſee what ſhe was at? "The devil fly away with her!" ſaid he, "ſhe's as cunning as his dam. Why, no wonder the gentlewoman wants to take Miſs in tow—Her father is a widower—No bad look-out for the widow herſelf, who is not over-burdened with money. But more than that, there's a ſon in the caſe."—"A ſon?" cried I, imagining I at once ſaw the cauſe of Henrietta's coldneſs to me. "Yes," replied my informer; "but Miſs has never ſeen him yet. You muſt know, that in this madam's jiggeting backwards and forwards, getting things to rights, I've laid my tackle to make out what ſhe was; and I find ſhe's mother to one Apthorp, a lawyer, who had a place under

Government in Antigua, and who is now removed to Jamaica to a better thing; I don't know your law terms, not I; but though I've ſeen this mother what d'ye call 'um but twice, I know ſhe intends nothing more or leſs than to marry the father herſelf, and her ſon to his daughter." Numberleſs circumſtances now occurred to me, to convince me that the old captain gueſſed the truth. Yet Henrietta was at once acquitted; for I knew ſhe had never ſeen the ſon, or at leaſt not ſince ſhe was a child: my indignation, however, againſt the mercenary art of her pretended friend was ſuch as I no longer attempted to diſguiſe.

You muſt often, my dear friend, have ſeen and lamented the occaſional weakneſs of the ſtrongeſt minds, when either from habit or prejudice they put their underſtandings into the guidance of others, and are either too indolent or too timid to dare to think for themſelves.

Henrietta

Henrietta had infinitely more natural ſenſe than the woman by whom ſhe ſuffered herſelf to be led; yet, being accuſtomed to the government of her aunt, and hearing perpetual changes rung upon the words prudence, propriety, diſcretion, and decorum, the opinion of the world, and the neceſſary ſubmiſſion of every body to its deciſions, Henrietta had given up every opinion of her own, and even her affection for me ſeemed ſuſpended by her apprehenſions of cenſure. But my indignant impatience now broke through all forms; I openly declared my conviction that Mrs. Apthorp had deſigns againſt her fortune in favour of this ſon; and, I believe, gave hints of what would follow *his* avowing his pretenſions —which threw the lady into very diſtreſſing confuſion; while Henrietta, taking me to another part of the ſhip, endeavoured to ſoothe and appeaſe me, by proteſting that Mrs. Apthorp had never once

named this ſon in the way of recommending him to her; that ſhe was perſuaded her views were very different, and that affection for her, diſintereſted affection, had more weight than any thing elſe in the reſolution Mrs. Apthorp had taken to go to Jamaica. Though I was farther than ever from being convinced, I could not bear the tears of Henrietta, who implored me not to part with her in anger. "Though propriety forbids our going in the ſame ſhip," ſaid ſhe, "we ſhall yet be on our way together. I ſhall learn to diſtinguiſh that in which you are to embark. We may be often near each other; nor, as I underſtand, is it impoſſible for you to come on board this veſſel. Abſent or preſent, I ſhall conſider you as my future huſband. As ſuch I ſhall, I am ſure, have courage to ſpeak of you to my father, and a very few weeks will unite us to part from each other no more." Smiling through her tears, Henrietta endeavoured to pre-

vail upon me to be as ſatisfied as ſhe wiſhed to appear with the flattering proſpect ſhe thus preſented to me. But though I could not reſolve to diſtreſs her by ſhewing how little all this pleaſed me, I left her "rather in ſorrow than in anger," vainly attempting to argue myſelf out of a perſuaſion, that, far from meeting happily as ſhe had deſcribed, we ſhould never meet again.

But, continued my friend, I have a ſort of hiſtory of my poor Henrietta's voyage, and ſubſequent adventures, written by herſelf, which I will put into your hands. She began it at my deſire, while ſhe was on ſhipboard, to fix in her mind the ideas of ſuch objects as then occurred in a new mode of life. When, after the alarming ſituations ſhe was afterwards thrown into, ſhe began to recover health and recollection, ſhe added the incidents as they affected her, and ſhe has from time to time corrected the nar-

rative, as the cruel circumſtances of thoſe hours of terror returned to her mind.

But, before you read this, let me fill up the chaſm there will otherwiſe be in the ſtory, by telling you, that when we had been about a fortnight at ſea, (during which we had ſuch very bad weather that I never could go on board the Argonaut, a merchant ſhip in which was Henrietta,) one of the frigates which were our convoy made a ſignal for ſeparation; and with the veſſels under his care, whalers for the South Sea, and victuallers for St. Helena, he left us. We ſome days afterwards made the Madeiras; where, going on ſhore at Fonchiale, I once more ſaw my Henrietta, and once more implored her to change a reſolution, which I had a ſtrange prevention would be fatal to one of us. I ſaw that ſhe too had her fears, and that the tedium and ſickneſs which are uſually felt in ſuch a voyage had greatly

greatly enfeebled her ſpirits. Yet the change ſeemed not to be favourable to me. It rather ſerved to put her more than ever into the power of Mrs. Apthorp; who hardly allowed me, during our ſhort ſtay on ſhore, an opportunity of converſing alone with Henrietta even for five minutes. Yet I thought it evident that the reſtraint to which ſhe thus ſubmitted was uneaſy to her, though ſhe had not the courage to throw it off; and I will own, that, irritated beyond all patient endurance, I returned on board more than half reſolved to break an engagement, however dear to my heart, which, if it were completed, would, I feared, unite me to a woman of a feeble mind, whoſe affection for me it would too probably be in the power of any artful buſy meddler to weaken or eſtrange. Yet ſcarce had I ſuffered myſelf to dwell a moment on this idea, before that of Henrietta, lovely in the unſuſpecting innocence of youth, ſuch as I had firſt

ſeen her; her ſimplicity, her beauty, her early talents, of which ſhe was totally unconſcious; her mild temper and ſenſible heart, all aſſembled to diſſolve it: and again I fondly flattered myſelf, that when we ſhould meet in Jamaica, her ſenſe of duty being ſatisfied, ſhe would be reſtored to me ſuch as ſhe once was—and that even her errors, while they gave me pain, were the effect of virtue.

My eyes were inceſſantly in ſearch of the ſhip in which ſhe was. If for ſome hours I loſt ſight of it, my impatience to regain it made me importune the maſter, and bribe the ſailors, who however were willing enough to gratify me. But though that in which I had taken my paſſage was a lighter veſſel than the Argonaut, ſhe was old and foul, ſcantily manned, and a very indifferent ſailer, ſo that we were often very far from the convoy: and one morning, five days from our leaving Madeira, we found ourſelves, after a ſtormy night, in which the dead-

dead-lights had been put up, abſolutely alone; being but juſt able from the maſt-head to diſcern the top-ſails of our companions many leagues to the weſtward. It was in vain that the captain and crew appeared to exert themſelves to fetch up the way they had loſt. Even the diſtant view of the ſails, with which I had for ſome time conſoled myſelf, was now loſt; a wide, wide horizon was before me, but the objects I ſought were vaniſhed into air. To add to my anxiety, it fell a dead calm, and our veſſel lay like a log on the water. A ſtorm would have been a thouſand times more welcome, for then my mind would have been occupied. Now I felt as if I deſired to diſengage my ſoul from its earthly bondage, that I might flit through the air unobſtructed, and watch over Henrietta, whom I had but a few days before thought of as one who could never conſtitute my felicity, and whom it

would be wiſe to endeavour to forget: ſo ſtrange and capricious an animal is man!

I will not attempt to deſcribe my impatience, or the torments in which I paſſed ſome hours. A favourable wind then ſprang up, which bore us directly on our courſe; and though I had very little hope of overtaking the fleet, I now flattered myſelf that I ſhould not be many days after Henrietta at Port Royal. I redoubled my entreaties to the men—as if they could do any thing more than they had already done. But, unfortunately for us all, they had ſoon another motive for exertion. On the fourth day after we had been thus deſerted, there was a cry of "two ſail to leeward!" I ran eagerly to know if they were any of our fleet. The captain aſſured me, that they were not, but, he apprehended, enemies; and in a very ſhort time we were convinced that they were large French privateers. Our attempts to eſcape were vain, and

reſiſt-

reſiſtance would have been a mere waſte of life. Inſtead therefore of landing in Jamaica a few hours or days after Henrietta, I found myſelf a priſoner, and was carried by my captors into Rochfort.

Imagine, my friend, what I ſuffered when I reflected on the diſtance that was now between us, and the time that muſt elapſe before I could rejoin Henrietta, at this moment dearer to me than ever. I figured to myſelf her anxiety for me, and the reproaches ſhe would make herſelf for having refuſed to admit me on board the ſame ſhip; while on the other hand the triumph of Mrs. Apthorp, perhaps the ſucceſs of the plans which I could not doubt her having formed, tormented me inceſſantly. As money was the ſole object of my captors, and no advantage could be gained by my detention, I agreed with them for my releaſe; and after having been about ſix weeks a priſoner, I was ſuffered to de-

part. But I had a great part of France to croſs before I could reach a port from whence cartels paſſed to England, and it was ſix weeks longer before I arrived in London. The neceſſity of repairing the loſſes I had ſuſtained detained me only a few days. I haſtened to Falmouth, to embark in a Government packet; but there I was kept near a month by winds ſo violent and contrary, that it was impoſſible to put to ſea. Our paſſage was afterwards unuſually tedious, ſo that I arrived not in Jamaica till almoſt ſix months after I loſt ſight of Henrietta. Her own narrative, which is addreſſed to me, ſhall tell you the reſt. To you I make no ſcruple of confiding thoſe ſimple effuſions of tenderneſs with which it is intermixed:

On board the Argonaut, at Sea,
quitting the Madeira Iſlands.

"I HAVE loſt ſight of you, Denbigh; and once more the land where we laſt met recedes, and we enter again on the wide world of waters. I obey you in committing to paper my ſenſations and my remarks, though the firſt are all melancholy, and the latter will perhaps be puerile. You were diſpleaſed with me, my friend; I ſaw uneaſineſs and reſentment beneath the forced kindneſs of your laſt adieu, and the recollection of that moment is embittered by it. Yet how often has it been inculcated, how often have you enforced the maxim, that when we feel we have done right we ſhould be at peace with ourſelves! And ſurely, when you will allow yourſelf to reflect coolly on my ſituation, you will acknowledge that I have acted with propriety. Surely, Denbigh, this is the only ſubject on which we could differ. May we never differ again!—Oh! if you knew how anxiouſly I look out for the veſſel which bears

bears you, and which I am even in ſearch of with a glaſs, and know from the obſervations you taught me to make, you would not think that the refuſal you complain of aroſe from indifference.

" Ah! had not prudence, and deference for the cuſtoms and opinions of the world, determined that it muſt be otherwiſe, to ſay nothing of the abſolute neceſſity of my not appearing to act in ſo important a matter decidedly without the concurrence of my father, how happy would it have made me to have had your converſation to animate the tedioufneſs of the voyage! and how doubly delightful would every appearance of nature be, which I could remark with you, or which you would point out to me!

" Laſt night, after we weighed anchor, and were leaving the Bay of Fonchiale, I ſat upon deck with my female companions. They were talking of I know not what parties and people with whom they are acquainted, and by their vivacity ſeemed, from the recollection of

of what had paſſed in theſe ſocieties, to receive great pleaſure; but did their converſation convey any to me? Alas! no. On the contrary, I withdrew from them as far as I could; and, as it became dark, I watched the lights of the different ſhips. But I could not diſtinguiſh yours—when all were colourleſs upon the water, and none particularly marked but the convoying frigate. Yet I loved to imagine that you were engaged, as I was, in obſerving the beauty of the moon and ſtars, brighter and differently coloured, ſurely, than they appear in England. I loved to fancy that you were admiring, as I was, the long ſtream of ineffable brilliance, with which the moon illuminated the ſlowly undulating waves—while I ſaw ſucceſſively ſeveral ſhips croſs this radiant line, their ſails catching the moonbeams for awhile, and then gradually and majeſtically falling into ſhadow. I had never obſerved the night ſea ſo beautiful; and again how earneſtly did I wiſh you with me, and how ſad ſunk my heart

heart when I thought of the half-ſtifled coldneſs with which you ſaid "Farewell, Henrietta!" as you deſcended the ſhip's ſide into the boat which was to take you to your own! "Farewell, Henrietta!" Ah, Denbigh! it was the tone with which you ſpoke that has ſo affected me. Indeed my dear friend! it was unkind. Yet you did not intend, perhaps, to give me pain. Oh! no, you could not intend it; nor could you gueſs that I ſhould paſs a wretched reſtleſs night, repeating continually to myſelf "Farewell, Henrietta!"

It was utterly impoſſible for me to ſleep. The heat, added to the anxiety of my mind, compelled me to quit my uneaſy bed. I went out into the gallery, and beheld a ſpectacle ſo glorious, as might, to a well-regulated mind, ſuſpend all the petty cares of this world. The ſun aroſe in all his undeſcribable glory. A thouſand tranſient hues, ſuch as I had never remarked before, wavered on the ſea, now glowing with roſe colour fading into

into pale orange; then amber, blue, and purple, like the fleeting ſhades of the moſt brilliant opal, varied the ſoftly ſwelling waves, till towards the weſt they became of a deep green, the ſky above yet tinged with dark clouds that hang on "the rear of night."

I perceived, in proportion as the ſun became higher, that clearneſs of the atmoſphere which I remembered you had told me was to be ſeen in theſe high latitudes; I ſaw too in greater numbers, what I had before obſerved, the flying fiſh, purſued by the dolphins or other fiſh of prey, emerging from the waves on their wing-like fins, and flickering along the ſurface of the water; from whence they were ſometimes driven by the appearance of a ſea-bird, from whoſe attack they ſheltered themſelves again in their native element. Their ſilver ſcales and tremulous cob-web wings glancing with a ſingular kind of ſhort flight over the blue waves, and the

the rapidity with which their aërial enemies darted upon them, while I ſaw every where the many-coloured dolphins throwing themſelves half out of the water in the eagerneſs of their purſuit, intereſted me for ſome time, or rather gave me cauſe for reflection. I tried to remember where I had read a compariſon between ſome unfortunate perſecuted characters in human life, and thoſe poor haraſſed inhabitants of the ſea, who ſeem to have gained but little by their faculty of flying. As the land receded, however, the birds were leſs frequent. The heat ſoon became intenſe; and I received ſome remonſtrances from my careful companion on the impropriety of expoſing myſelf to the ſun, and the reflection of the ſea. Yet, believe me, Denbigh, I would not retire for the morning, till I had, with the aſſiſtance of poor Juana *, who is more an adept than I am, deſcried the Emily; though ſurely ſhe does not fail

* A black female ſervant.

ſo

ſo well as moſt others of the fleet, for ſhe is always pointed out to me farther off than almoſt any of them.

"Well, my good friend, have I not begun to obey you? Alas! in the monotonous life we lead on board ſhip, how little is there to write about. After a day ſufficiently calm, yet with wind enough to bear us on our courſe, we have nothing to do but to wiſh that the following day may be equally favourable. Oh! how weary am I already of the ſea!—Yet do I long to be on ſhore? I can hardly anſwer in the affirmative, though I go to the arms of a parent.

"I fear that ſo long an abſence as mine, for it is eleven years ſince I was ſent from the paternal roof, may have eſtranged my father from me. Certainly he never expreſſed the leaſt wiſh to ſee me till after the death of my brother. I have wept at the coldneſs which I thought was viſible in the few letters he wrote either to me or my aunt. I ſee

ſuch

ſuch an awe of him, that I tremble when I think of the firſt interview; and ſometimes, to appeaſe the dread which perpetually aſſails me, I endeavour to form ſome idea of the manner, the perſon, and the character of my father, and for that purpoſe to engage Captain More to deſcribe him to me; but I obſerve that all he ſays is conſtrained, and he ſeems to anſwer not as he thinks, but as it is neceſſary for him to do to the daughter of a man who has it in his power ſo materially to befriend him. He ſpeaks of the luxury of the table at my father's houſe; of the number of ſlaves kept ſolely for domeſtic purpoſes; of the quantity of wine conſumed at his table, and of his conſequence in the iſland. But why do I hear nothing of his benevolence; of his private friends; of his kindneſs to his people, and of his being beloved as well as feared? Ah! if he ſhould be harſh to me—if he ſhould not love me—if he ſhould have other views

views for me———But wherefore ſhould I thus torment myſelf? Mrs. Sibthorp very juſtly, though very ſeverely, reproves me for it. She ſays, I am too apt to anticipate evil; and that, after all, a young woman ſhould have no will of her own. But you love her, Denbigh, ſo little already, that I will not make you love her leſs by repeating axioms to which I know you will not agree; though indeed she is a very excellent woman, and one whom you would have liked in any other character than that of my adviſer. Ah! Denbigh, does it never occur to you, that when I put myſelf thus under the guidance of another, it is a proof that I am conſcious of my own weakneſs, and of an inability to govern myſelf."

"I again begin to write, though I have nothing, alas! to ſay but a wretched repetition of what I have ſo often written already—yet with one aggravating circumſtance—I have looked in vain

theſe

theſe laſt three days for the Emily. I have employed Juana to look, and to engage two of the ſea-boys in the ſame inquiry; but they have every day repeated that they do not ſee her. I never felt till now the miſery of ſuſpenſe. The wind is fair, and carries on the ſhip with a rapidity which will bring us they ſay into port in three weeks, if it continues. Would it were over, ſince it muſt be, this meeting ſo dreaded at once and deſired! But if I were ſure, Denbigh, that the Emily will arrive at the ſame time, I ſhould, methinks, look forward to that period with more confidence than I now do. Alas! my friend, another day is paſſed, and ſtill Juana anſwers my inquiries with "No, Miſſy, not ſee hims yet."

"Theſe laſt days have been paſſed in a moſt comfortleſs way. One of the children of Mrs. Willis, a fellow-paſſenger, has been ill; and the poor mother, half diſtracted,

diſtracted, has found ſome relief in my ſharing with her the fatigue of attending on the poor little patient, who is now, I truſt, out of danger. But how greatly are the anxieties of their friends, and the ſufferings of the ſick increaſed by being on ſhip-board! Mrs. Willis, as nobody in this veſſel pretends to act in the capacity of doctor or ſurgeon, attempted to procure aſſiſtance from the ſhip of war; but the captain made ſo many difficulties, and appeared ſo little ſenſible of the painful ſolicitudes of a parent, that three days were waſted, and at laſt the ſurgeon came on board. He is intelligent and obliging; and it was at leaſt a ſatisfaction to Mrs. Willis to find that all ſhe has done is right, and that the little girl is out of danger. Yet to me this viſit has been productive of new alarm. I ventured tremblingly to inquire whether any of the ſhips of the convoy were miſſing, and had the inconceivable mortification of hearing, that

that there was one, if not two, which had not been ſeen for many days. I then hazarded another queſtion: ‘ Do you know, Sir, the names of theſe ſhips?” I believe the young man diſcovered from my manner the particular intereſt I took in his anſwer; for he ſmiled, and aſſured me, he was very ſorry that he was unable to anſwer my queſtion, but that he was wholly unacquainted with the names of any of the ſhips; nor ſhould he probably have known that any of the number were miſſing, had he not heard captain Ramſay exclaiming vehemently againſt the commanders of the merchantmen, who he declared were often in league with the enemy, and left the convoy on purpoſe to be taken.

“ Alas, my dear Denbigh! this has not ſerved to elevate my ſpirits. Should the man who commands your ſhip be one of this deſcription!.....I ſometimes reproach myſelf for our ſeparation, and am weak enough to yield to thoſe ſtrange fore-

forebodings of evil, which for want of a more appropriate word we call preſentiments. If we are ſeparated to meet no more!—Oh! no. I dare not truſt myſelf with an idea ſo utterly inſupportable."

"I have been many days incapable of writing. The Emily is certainly not with the convoy, and for what purpoſe ſhould I commit my thoughts to paper, ſince he whom alone they are likely to intereſt, will not ſee them? A thouſand conjectures torment me. I put Mrs. Apthorp out of humour by my queſtions, and weary every body elſe, who 'anſwer neglectingly they know not what.' And why, indeed, ſhould I expect that my ſolicitude will intereſt them?—Alas! Denbigh, I begin to feel all the wretchedneſs of being an inſulated being, even for this little ſpace. Mrs. Apthorp loves me—I am ſure ſhe does; but ſhe cannot comprehend my feelings, and ſeems to diſapprove of my indulging

them. I endeavour therefore to conceal them. The iſland of Jamaica is now viſible from the maſt-head. To-morrow evening they ſay we ſhall caſt anchor. — To-morrow evening! —And you, Denbigh, will not be there to ſupport me. Yet do I not go to a father?—have I not a friend with me, whoſe affection for me is almoſt maternal? If I were ſatisfied of your ſafety, I would endeavour to tranquillize my ſpirits, and to meet my father as I ought to do;—but this cruel uncertainty is inſupportable."

"The poor Henrietta is at laſt at what ſhe muſt call her home; and in purſuance of her promiſe will endeavour to relate her ſenſations and deſcribe her ſituation. But while I attempt it my ſpirits ſink; for who knows if ever you will read what I write? You, who do not appear, of whom nothing is known, and of whom I dare not now venture to inquire!—But they told me before

before I left Kingſton, that it was probable the ſhip in which you were, together with another miſſing ſhip, was taken by the enemy. My friend, I have always been told, that the conſciouſneſs of having acted right would in every event of life beſtow a certain degree of happineſs and tranquillity. I thought I had acted right when I reſiſted your wiſh of accompanying me in the ſame veſſel. Yet I am unhappy, indeed I am very unhappy; and I have not now one friend to whom I can venture to ſay ſo, or from whom I can receive the pity and conſolation I ſo greatly need.

"My father did not meet me at the port as I expected; he ſent one of his manager or agents to receive and conduct me to this place. Overcome with all the diſagreeable circumſtances of our landing, almoſt fainting with heat, anxiety, and fatigue, I was not ſorry that a meeting to me ſo awful was poſtponed. Yet it appeared unkind; and I felt that I

never wanted more the preſence of a friend. Mrs. Apthorp prepared to accompany me, as ſhe had always promiſed; and as her ſon, who was the principal object of her voyage, was not yet arrived, I had no heſitation in accepting this farther proof of her friendſhip: but Mr. Grabb the manager, who was to be my eſcort, having learned what was her intention, very gravely approached meas we were nearly ready to ſet out, and told me, without much circumlocution or apology, that he had his employer's directions not to ſuffer any perſon whatſoever to go with me. I was grieved and aſtoniſhed at ſuch an order, and repreſented to the man, that my father could never mean to exclude a female friend ſo reſpectable as Mrs. Apthorp, who had ſo kindly protected me during the voyage. Mr. Grabb replied, that he had nothing to ſay to all that, but his orders were ſo poſitive, that he dared not and would not diſobey them. Mrs. Apthorp,

Apthorp, extremely mortified, then desisted, and prepared to depart for the house of a relation, where she now said she intended to stay till her son came; who, from something she unguardedly dropped, was, I found, wholly unacquainted with her arrival, and was first to learn it from letters she was now to write to him. Our separation was immediate, and melancholy enough to me. I got into the post-chaise which my father had sent for me, attended by Juana, who, however pleased to revisit her native land, thought I could perceive with sentiments very far from pleasure of her former master. Escorted by so strange a looking man as Mr. Grabb, who rode very magisterially by the side of the chaise, as if to guard me, my poor heart became heavier than ever, and I anticipated with increased terror the meeting which I ought to have considered with pleasure.

" The journey was tedious, and the

heat almoſt intolerable. This diſtance is about thirty miles, and though my father's horſes were excellent, and his whole equipage well appointed, the road was rugged, and the heat extreme, ſo that it was the evening of the ſecond day before we arrived at Horton's, an houſe my father built about eleven years ago, on one of his largeſt eſtates near the ſea. In deſpite of the agitation of my ſpirits, I could not help admiring the beauty of the country I had paſſed through; and the houſe to which I now, at night-fall, approached was bet-better than any I had ſeen on the way. A great number of ſlaves crowded round the carriage when it ſtopped. Some ſeemed eagerly watching an opportunity of being noticed by their young lady, others greeted their old friend or relation Juana. I was ſhocked at the harſhneſs with which the man who attended me drove them away; and his coun-

countenance, as he helped me from the carriage, expreſſed ſo diſagreeable a mixture of arrogance and ſubmiſſion, that I involuntarily recoiled from him, and felt a ſort of relief in ſeeing Amponah, my father's black ſervant, who attended my brother to England, and was almoſt a twelvemonth in my aunt's family. He now ſeemed rather an old acquaintance whom I was rejoiced to ſee, than an abject ſlave, ſuch as by the manager's behaviour towards him he appeared to be conſidered; and I followed him, trembling, when he led the way to my father's apartment.

"I was ſoon in the preſence of this parent, from whom I have been ſo long eſtranged; but I became ſo ill from the variety of emotions aſſailing me, that I merely ſaw him, endeavoured to kneel to him and kiſs his hand, and then ſank down inſenſible before him and ſome other perſons (I knew not then

who they were) that were about him. When I recovered my recollection, which was in a few moments, I ſaw ſtrange female faces of many ſhades around me. My father was not there, and the dreaded interview was to be again attempted. It is ſo difficult, my friend, in ſome caſes, for a child to ſpeak of a parent conſiſtently at once with truth and duty, that I muſt be allowed to be entirely ſilent in regard to my father; unleſs I ſhould be compelled to ſpeak of him, in conſequence of the power he poſſeſſes over me, and on the manner of his uſing which, it depends, whether I ſhall be happy, or the moſt miſerable of human beings.

"Oh, Denbigh! that you were here, that this fearful point might be brought to an iſſue! But you are afar off. You cannot even adviſe. "Farewell, Henrietta!" were the laſt words I ever heard you utter—The tone in which they were

uttered

uttered vibrates on my ear; I repeat it to myself; it appears like an eternal adieu!

"I have had nothing to add to my narrative for some days, at least nothing that I like to write on, or that you would like to read; and for the persons who surround me, I would I could escape ever naming them! Do you know, Denbigh, that there are three young women here, living in the house, *of colour*, as they are called, who are, I understand, my sisters by the half blood! They are the daughters of my father by his black and mulatto slaves; and the awkwardness I felt when I was first under the necessity of addressing myself to them, seemed very wonderful to the people here, who see nothing extraordinary or uncommon in such an arrangement as my father has made in his family. They speak an odd sort of dialect, more resembling that of the negroes than the English spoken in England; and their odd manners, their

love of finery, and curiosity about my clothes and ornaments, together with their total insensibility to their own situation, is, I own, very distressing to me. The youngest of them, who is a quadroon—a mestize—I know not what—is nearly as fair as I am; but she has the small eye, the prominent brow, and something particular in the form of the cheek, which is, I have understood, usual with the creoles even who have not any of the negro blood in their veins. As I am a native of this island, perhaps I have the same cast of countenance without being conscious of it, and I will be woman enough to acknowledge that the supposition is not flattering.

"This little girl, however, (for she is but twelve years old) I have attempted to instruct, when I could enough command my spirits to attend to any thing: but she is so ignorant, so much the creature either of origin or of habit, that I can-

not make her comprehend the ſimpleſt inſtruction, and our leſſon generally ends in her begging of me ſome ribbon, feather, or other trifling ornament, which I give her on her promiſing to attend more another time:—a promiſe which ſhe never remembers. Alas! Denbigh, my days paſs moſt unpleaſantly here: beſides the continual uneaſineſs which I ſuffer from the uncertainty I am in about you, which would no where allow me a moment's repoſe, I am moſt comfortleſs in having no one to whom I can ſpeak unreſervedly, no one who underſtands me. My father is often abſent. Why am I compelled to ſay, that his abſence relieves me from a part of my ſufferings?—He is engaged, deeply engaged, in quelling thoſe unhappy people whom they call Maroons, who have done him, I underſtand, conſiderable injury, and have now among them many of his runaway negroes; againſt whom, if they are taken, he me-

ditates, I find, modes of revenge, which are really ſo horrible only to hear mentioned, that I am often under the neceſſity of leaving the room. Yet dare I not expreſs the terror and diſguſt with which ſuch inhumanity fills my mind; for, whatever I ſay, whatever I do, is related to my father, who reproves me with ſo much harſhneſs, that I cannot help ſinking before him into tears and deſpondence, ſuch as guilt alone ought to ſubject me to. But from mere unwillingneſs to name it, I delay to tell you—(tell you? Alas! will you ever read this?)—the heavieſt and moſt menacing of all the evils which either ſurround or threaten me. We deceived ourſelves, my dear friend! while we hoped and believed that my father could have no objection to you; when we took it for granted, becauſe reaſon ſeemed to authoriſe our doing ſo, that there could be no obſtacle to our union. There is an obſtacle my trembling hand

hand refuſes to write, an unconquerable impediment, of which we dreamed not:—My father's ſtrange reſolution to *raiſe* a dependent to the rank of his ſon-in-law; to make the fortune of a man in humble life wholly dependent on, and owing every thing to him. Such a man, willing to be wholly his creature, and to owe his fortune to him, had my father found when he ſo peremptorily directed my ill-fated voyage. And hence it was, that, having had ſome intelligence, I know not from what quarter, of the attachment you honoured me with, as well as of Mrs. Apthorp's deſigns in favour of her ſon, he ſent orders that no one ſhould be ſuffered to accompany me hither.

"For many days, however, after my arrival, I was kept ignorant of this. But the perſon for whoſe ſlave my father deſigns me was introduced to me as a friend of his, for whom he had a particular eſteem. I hardly looked at

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the man. Naturally careleſs and indolent, you have often told me I am too indifferent about the people I meet with in the common intercourſe of life, and make no remarks on character. I own I ſee ſo little worth remarking, and people ſeem to me to be ſo little diſtinguiſhed one from the other in this money-getting country, that, were I to ſee half the land-holders of the iſland aſſembled, I ſhould probably be unable to remark in one of them any diſcriminating feature. I therefore ſaw this man, whoſe name is Sawkins, without noticing him when he was preſent, and, the moment he was abſent, forgot I had ever ſeen him at all.

"Not only ſo, but when two or three days afterwards he came again, and ſmiled and ſmirked, and looked I thought marvelouſly impertinent, his name had ſo entirely eſcaped me, that, when I left the room in diſguſt, I inquired of Amponah, one of the few ſervants

vants in the houſe to whom I can ſpeak, who that perſon was. The poor fellow appeared to be ſurpriſed at my queſtion, and anſwered, 'Maſter not tell you, Miſs?' I ſaid I ſhould not have inquired, but that I had forgotten his name. 'Ah, Miſs, Miſs!' replied Amponah, 'dat man is one day n'other to be our maſter.'—'Your maſter, Amponah?'—'Yes: maſter give him you, Miſs, and all this great rich eſtates, and pens and all.'

"This was the firſt intimation I had ever received of my father's intention, and it ſeemed now to be ſo utterly improbable, that I fancied Amponah muſt be miſtaken. I ſmiled therefore as I told him ſo. The poor fellow ſighed deeply, and, ſhaking his head, replied, 'What I ſay is trute; that man is him maſter means to make marry you, Miſs.'—'But, Amponah, what is he?'—'What is he, Miſs? Oh! he nephew to a vidow lady maſter like, and go ſee ſome-

ſometime t'other ſide de Iſland. Ah, Miſs! we know well enough who he is; he is poor man, bad man, cruel man; but *we* muſt not ſpeak. Yet,' added Amponah, in a tone and manner altogether unlike his uſual way of ſpeaking, 'yet, for *ſuch* man to be *your* huſband, Miſs!'—I was, I hardly know why, terrified at the honeſt indignation of this faithful ſervant. There muſt, ſurely, be ſomething ſingularly obnoxious in the character of this man, that the very idea of his becoming the maſter of theſe people could thus move one of them. I was unwilling, however, to continue the converſation, but went to my own apartment, my heart more agitated than it has ever yet been, my whole frame trembling, and my thoughts confuſedly recurring to what I had heard. I ſeemed unable to breathe, and was compelled to lie down for half an hour to recover and argue myſelf into a ſtate of more rational compoſure.

"I was willing to flatter myſelf that Amponah was miſtaken. 'What motive can there be?' ſaid I, 'what end can my father propoſe in marrying me to a perſon who ſeems, if he is not rich, to poſſeſs no one recommendation? It is, I muſt believe, it is impoſſible!'

"So I argued, and by ſuch means I endeavoured to quiet the cruel alarm that Amponah's information had given me. But the longer I reflected, the more probable it ſeemed, becauſe I recollected many circumſtances which had eſcaped me in my father's converſation and manner. As there are various ſpecies of pride, there are various ways of indulging it. Some men are delighted by allying themſelves to rank or to riches. My father's pride has, it ſeems, taken a contrary direction, and is to be gratified only by raiſing an inferior to affluence and conſideration, who ſhall be wholly the creature of his power, and owe every thing to his favour. How

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he may to this end ſacrifice his daughter, and ruin her peace for ever, appears to be no part of his conſideration. Always accuſtomed to command, and to look on thoſe about him rather as machines who were to move only at his nod, than as beings who had wills and inclinations of their own, a man of equal or even of affluent or independent fortune would not on theſe terms become a part of his family. His choice therefore is neceſſarily directed to ſuch an animal as this dependent; for Mr. Sawkins is, I underſtand, the nephew of a low woman, who came from England ſome years ago as houſekeeper to a planter, and, being rather well-looking at that time, became ſo great a favourite with her maſter, that at his death he left her a large *pen* near Kingſton, and a conſiderable ſum of money, with which ſhe has ſince purchaſed a plantation and ſlaves, of which her nephew is the manager. And it is to ſuch an alliance,

Denbigh,

Denbigh, that my father ſacrifices his daughter. I talk, however, as if this deteſted alliance would ever take place. It never ſhall; never, though I periſh in attempting to avoid it.....

"Another week is paſſed, and my father's intentions have been formally announced to me; I might rather have ſaid, peremptorily declared. 'Tel eſt notre plaiſir,' was never uttered from the moſt deſpotic throne with more inflexible harſhneſs. I was forbidden all reply; and ordered not to remonſtrate, but to prepare to obey. I was told that Mr. Sawkins was then in the houſe, and that I muſt receive him as the man choſen for me by him who knew how to make himſelf obeyed. 'I know,' ſaid my father, 'I know that you have preſumed to have other views for yourſelf. I know that artful people, calling themſelves your friends, have had their views alſo on *my* fortune. To put an end at once and for ever to all

ſuch

ſuch projects, it is my intention to have your marriage with the perſon I have elected for you concluded within a month.' He perceived that I had collected courage to ſpeak, and ſtopped me, by abruptly ſaying, in an angry tone, 'Look'ye, Henrietta, I never ſuffer contradiction. Your arguments will be vain; your oppoſition fatal to yourſelf. I expect to hear, in the courſe of the day, that you have acquitted yourſelf in regard to your behaviour to my friend, as common ſenſe and duty, or, if thoſe have no influence, as my poſitive *command* directs." So ſaying, my father left the room; and Mr. Sawkins, with a cringeing bow, made his appearance. I had hardly a moment's time to recover my recollection, and to repeat. Yes, Denbigh, in that moment, I ſolemnly repeated a vow to Heaven, that never ſhould my hand be given in marriage but to you. Having thus called upon all that is held ſacred to witneſs

witneſs my unalterable reſolution, I felt my courage renewed, and turned to meet the unwelcome candidate for my father's eſtate, who ſeemed to be very little at his eaſe. The baſe ſpirit of a paraſite was viſible on his countetnance, yet ſtill there lurked under it a ſort of malignant expreſſion, which, while I poſitively, and I own with very little attention to politeneſs, rejected his ſuit, acquired inſenſibly the aſcendant, and I ſhuddered while I remarked it. I cannot, Denbigh, repeat the particulars of our converſation; which I ſhortened as much as poſſible, and left him with a declaration couched in the ſtrongeſt terms I could find, that my father might take away my life, but never ſhould compel me to plight at the altar my faith to a man of whom I knew little, and towards whom that little had only ſerved to excite my diſlike, nay, even my contempt. I then left the room, and haſtened to my own, where I locked myſelf in;

in; breathleſs and half dead, trembling at the reſolution I had executed, yet feeling the immediate and dreadful neceſſity there would be for farther exertion. Oh, Denbigh! how did your unhappy Henrietta now regret the want of a mother, to whoſe affectionate boſom ſhe might have flown for protection and conſolation! With what anguiſh did ſhe dwell on thoſe days for ever gone, when this loſs was ſupplied by the beſt of women and of friends; and when ſhe was bade to conſider you as the guardian of her youth, and the friend of her future life! Terrible was the contraſt as ſhe now looked around her: a father poſſeſſing unlimited power, and ſurrounded by ſlaves; in a remote houſe, of an iſland, many parts of which are liable to the attacks of ſavages driven to deſperation, and thirſting for the blood of any who reſembled even in colour their hereditary oppreſſors:—ſo that, to eſcape from the evil I dreaded by flight,

flight, which had at firſt ſtruck me as poſſible, now ſeemed to be only exchanging one mode of hideous and intolerable ſufferings for another.

"Such was, Denbigh—alas! ſuch is the ſituation of your unhappy friend. It is vainly, very vainly, I have attempted to collect that fortitude which you ſo often, as if you had foreſeen how much I was to need it, have tried to teach me; and with which in the firſt misfortune I had ever known, you never ceaſed trying to arm me. You then, I remember, uſed to lead me into the air, to turn my mind to the contemplation of the beauties of nature, and to point out to me a thouſand proofs of the benignity of that Being in whoſe hands I was; and who would not, you told me, afflict me beyond my ſtrength. I wept, and my tears were not tears of deſpair. They relieved my burſting boſom, and I breathed more at liberty. Now, I try the ſame means to obtain only the power

power of weeping. I go out into the open corridor, and gaze on the magnificence of heaven, ſpangled as it is with myriads of ſtars, brighter than I ever ſaw in Europe. The palmetos and mountain cabbage, of which there is a high wood adjoining to the houſe, bend their graceful heads, and wave their feathery leaves in the ſoft land wind which blows here at night. All is ſtill and calm; even the ſlaves who have toiled through the day, now reſt in tranquillity; but I am wretched, my eyes are turned towards heaven, filled with burning tears of hopeleſs anguiſh. It ſeems hardly in the power of Heaven itſelf to help me. And you, Denbigh!——It is now, I underſtand, certain that the ſhip you were in was taken by a French privateer. My father, my cruel father! who has acquired more information than I ever gave him, or was ever aſked to give, told me ſo yeſterday with an ill-natured ſmile, adding, that he underſtood

ſtood you were ſufficiently an adept in Jacobin principles, not to make a voyage to France any calamity to you: 'and,' continued he, "as to the inhabitants of this iſland, they can well diſpenſe with the preſence of ſuch a wrong-headed young man, who ſets up, they tell me, for a reformer. We have more than enough of fellows of that deſcription among us already. 'I heartily hope Mr. Denbigh will ſtay at Paris.'

"You have often told me—Ah! how continually do I recur to thoſe dear leſſons, of which, when they were given, I ſurely knew not the value!--You have often told me, that a woman ſhould acquire fixed principles, and upon them act with deciſion; and that there is nothing elſe that can prevent that wavering imbecility which makes us the ſport of every accident, and often ridiculous as well as wretched. I tried to do ſo—I acted on thoſe principles of duty towards my father, and of reverence for

the opinion of the world, which every body around me had taught me; and, contrary, oh! how contrary to my own wiſhes! refuſed to accede to your propoſal of accompanying me in the ſame ſhip. The conſequences are to me ſo dreadful, that I know not how I ſhall ever venture to decide again that I am acting right. Perhaps, diſguſted by my want of confidence, by my prudiſh miſtruſt in you, and truſt in another, you have determined, Denbigh, to forget me. Needleſs indeed is this aggravation of my miſeries; for, even if you have not thrown off the unfortunate Henrietta, an over-ruling and unconquerable deſtiny ſeems to have determined that we ſhall meet no more! Death, my dear friend, will end my diſtreſſes; for I feel it to be impoſſible that I ſhould live to be the wife—(how can I write the words?)—of Mr. Sawkins! You are good and generous; you will not pity me the leſs for having brought

brought all this upon myſelf. I remember often to have heard, when a circle of *friends* were talking over the misfortunes of ſome poor ſufferer, thoſe who affected compaſſion anſwered by others of a leſs gentle diſpoſition, with 'How can one pity a perſon who has brought their misfortune on themſelves?' Ah! ſurely, where ſelf-reproach is added to miſery, it embitters every pang. Yet I acted from prudence, from principle, from an unwillingneſs, at my time of life, to ſet at defiance the opinion of the world, which I was aſſured muſt be abſolutely againſt my leaving England accompanied by you. I recollect too, Denbigh, your frequently ridiculing thoſe who have what you juſtly called the myopia of the mind, who ſeeing only immediate and minute objects, ſuffer ſuch as are really of importance to eſcape them. I feel that I have been a myops in the preſent inſtance; and fearing the unreaſonable cenſure of half a

dozen old women, who would perhaps have forgotten me as ſoon as I ſhould them, I have incurred the heavieſt calamity that could poſſibly overtake me."

"Gracious God! what will become of me! I have juſt heard that I am to be removed to another eſtate my father poſſeſſes in the northern part of the iſland. It is now the very midſt of the autumnal rains; and ſuch rain, ſuch cataracts rather, and torrents of water, that no one thinks of travelling till it is over; but, from the information I have received, I doubt whether I ſhall be allowed to remain here even till theſe periodical tornados ceaſe. My father, I am aſſured by the faithful Amponah, the only ſervant in whom I have any confidence, is determined to proceed without farther conſulting me; and lawyers have been ſome days in the houſe drawing up the bill of ſale, for what elſe can I call it? He has been

uſed to purchaſe ſlaves, and feels no repugnance in ſelling his daughter to the moſt dreadful of all ſlavery! The more I reflect on th deſtiny he propoſes for me, the more impoſſible I find it to reduce my mind to ſubmiſſion. No, Denbigh, I can die—but to live the wife of a man I deſpiſe and abhor, I feel not to be in my power. Would I could believe that an alteration in my appearance would change the intentions of the purchaſer whom my father has choſen! for then I ſhould rejoice at theſe pallid looks, and this emaciated form; which now I only conſider as ſymptoms of decline, that though not rapid enough to ſave me from the tyranny ſo immediately meditated, will yet perhaps ſo enervate me as to prevent my eſcape; for to eſcape I will attempt if I am able, though every diſtreſs that human nature ſhrinks from moſt ſhould be inevitable.

"I have been compelled to ſubmit to three or four interviews with Mr. Sawkins. I cannot dwell upon them; they ſerve only to increaſe my horror and deteſtation. I muſt take ſome reſolution. What can I do? I addreſs myſelf in vain to Heaven; Heaven is deaf to my prayers. I call upon you, my beſt, my only friend! You are afar off; you cannot hear me.

"This laſt night, which has impreſſed every one elſe with terror, has to me given a few hours during which a gloomy hope ſuſpended the bitterneſs of my deſpair. After a moſt oppreſſively hot day, the ſun ſunk in blood-coloured light, and huge clouds of a dark leaden hue, ſpotted with reddiſh purple, collected in the horizon. A ſort of tremulous ſhivering ran among the leaves which no wind agitated, and the echo of the waves of the ſea was heard like the regular firing of diſtant artillery. The negroes apprehended an earthquake, and

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their fears were preſently communicated to the women, who form what I muſt I believe call my father's ſeraglio in this houſe. The vulgar of all nations ſeem to have a particular pleaſure in exaggerating danger, and frightening each other; and theſe ladies of every ſhade appeared to be trying who ſhould moſt expreſs apprehenſion. The little girl who had intereſted me more than the reſt threw herſelf into my arms, and wept bitterly; for ſhe had heard a great deal about hurricanes, and was perſuaded her laſt hour was come. I endeavoured to re-aſſure her, and prevail upon her to go to her mother; for I thought there might be ſome place more ſafe than the reſt, which theſe people might know, and wiſh to take ſhelter in; and I deſired to be alone, determined to take no precaution for my own ſafety; and as the ſtorm now came on with a fury of which I had before no idea, I felt a gloomy ſatisfaction in the hope that my

cruel ſolicitude might be ended for ever. The peals of thunder burſting, as it ſeemed, immediately over the houſe, and ſhaking it to its very centre, mingled with the roaring of the wind, the craſh of trees which were ſwept away before it, the howling of the negroes, and the cries of the women, who, as the tempeſt raved with renewed violence, uttered ſhrieks and yells more terrific than can be imagined; the vivid flaſhes of lightning, which ſeemed to penetrate every part of the building, and ran in blue rays along the floor; the flames of ſome of the negro houſes, of which the palm thatch had been fired by the lightning; and, above all, a hollow and undeſcribable ſubterraneous noiſe, muttering ſo as to be heard notwithſtanding the warring elements without, all combined to make me believe ſome fatal accident muſt happen: I ſay believe; becauſe I did *not* apprehend it. Maria, the little girl, perceiving ſhe could not perſuade me

me to fear, or to quit the part of the houſe where I was, and which was thought, I know not why, to be the leaſt ſafe, had gone to her mother, and I was quite alone in the apartments I uſually inhabit. No candle would remain burning, and I was involved in darkneſs; ſave only when the ſudden glare of the lightning momentarily illuminated every object. Yet ſo much greater is my dread of living in the power of a man I abhor, than of dying by the act of that God on whom innocence may rely, that I felt myſelf ready to exclaim with Zanga, "I like this rocking of the battlements;" and I do not know that I have for many weeks felt leſs wretched. In about an hour and a half the hurricane ſeemed to have been re-incited inſtead of exhauſted, till all at once there was a pauſe; a ſilence more terrific while it laſted than the fierceſt rage of the ſtorm. I thought I remembered to have heard, that ſuch a diſmal ſtillneſs preceded an

earthquake, and I almoſt believed that I felt the ground opening beneath my feet. I liſtened, breathleſs; and then fear for the firſt time during this dreadful night took poſſeſſion of me. I was without light; but I fancied I heard ſomebody breathe ſhort and quick cloſe to me. I ſpoke. 'Is it you, Maria?' ſaid I, imagining it might be the little girl. I had no anſwer; yet the perſon, whoever it was, ſeemed to be nearer to me, and to draw breath with ſtill greater difficulty. I roſe, and put my hands forward. They encountered a human creature, who trembled exceſſively as he ſeized one of them. I ſtruggled to diſengage my hand, and in a voice expreſſive of terror, inſiſted on knowing who it was hat held me. 'Be not frightened, dear lady, it is me.' I knew with aſtoniſhment the voice of Amponah.

"The great diſtance which is in this country kept inviolable between the black people and their maſter's family, and

and the degraded light in which they are conſidered, made me ſhudder and recoil from a liberty even the occaſion did not ſeem to warrant. Amponah, who trembled ſo much that he could hardly ſpeak, ſaid, he was too much afraid of what might happen to be able to leave me alone, and he came to conjure me to go where the reſt of the family were aſſembled, in the moſt ſecure part of the houſe. This, however, I poſitively refuſed, unleſs it was my father's orders. My father, he told me, had gone away the day before with Mr. Sawkins to St. Jago de la Vega. This accounted for my not having ſeen him during the danger, at which I had before been ſurpriſed. Not to prolong a conference with Amponah, who told me the tempeſt would begin again more violently than ever, I ordered him to go for lights, and aſſured him I had no apprehenſion, and deſired no one to have fears for me. He obeyed me, though it

ſeemed to be with reluctance; but, before he could return, the raging elements had renewed their conflict, and I thought it even worſe than before. I again ordered Amponah to leave me. He would have remonſtrated, and really ſeemed, poor fellow! to be quite bewildered and loſt through the extreme fear that poſſeſſed him; and as he put the candles down on a low table near me, there was an expreſſion ſo wild and fearful on his dark countenance, that I felt it alarm me even more than the whirlwind and thunder that were roaring without. I could not help imagining, from his manner, that he knew of ſome danger awaiting me, greater than that I ſhared in common with others, of ſuffering from the tempeſt.

"He left me, however, in ſilence; for I was afraid to queſtion him. I ſhut my doors as ſecurely as poſſible; having firſt ſatisfied myſelf, that no other of the black people had crept into the rooms, from

from the ſame motives as had influenced poor Amponah; and I liſtened, I think, with more indifference than before to 'the pelting of the pitileſs ſtorm.' It ceaſed not, however, till after day-break; and then the female negroes and mulattoes, who belonged to me, crowded into my room, each with ſome ſtory more terrible than the preceding, of what ſhe had feared or ſuffered. The devaſtation on the trees, the cane grounds, and garden, was indeed viſible enough. One poor negro had been killed by the fall of a beam in one of the boiling-houſes, which had been unroofed and half carried away; others had been bruiſed and wounded, and the manager was buſy in repairing the miſchief till a late hour; while I exerted myſelf all I could to aſſiſt the nurſes who attended the women, ſome of whom had juſt lain in, and had been expoſed with their infants to the rage of the hurricane, by having the roofs or other

parts

parts of their little cabins carried away by the wind.

"Nothing ſo much blunts the ſenſe of miſery as the activity of humanity. I returned from my viſits to theſe poor and apparently grateful people, at once ſo ſatisfied and ſo much fatigued, that I ſlept many hours, and forgot for awhile all I have to apprehend for myſelf."

"Alas! Denbigh, the tranquillity with the boaſt of which I finiſhed my laſt ſentence, was of no long duration. This morning the order arrived from my father, that I ſhould immediately remove, with the attendants he named, to the eſtate on the northern part of the iſland; which is, I am aſſured, a much more lonely ſituation than this. It is almoſt among the mountains, and no other cultivated land is within many miles. Surely, I can no where be more completely in his power than here. I have diſcovered this moment the reaſon of his removing me: a note

note has been clandeſtinely delivered to me by Amponah, from Mrs. Apthorp. She is at the houſe of a relation four miles from hence; and, alarmed for my ſafety, as every one, indeed, has been for that of his neighbour, ſent this inquiry, which Amponah has ventured to give me notwithſtanding the ſtrict injunctions, with menaces of puniſhment for diſobedience, which my father repeated to his whole houſehold, and left orders with Mr. Grabb to enforce.

"I have anſwered her: for even the ſemblance of friendſhip is ſoothing to one who lives, as I have lately done, cut off from all human intercourſe, and perſecuted even to death by him who ought to be my protector, my friend, my father! Yet I own, that ſince I have been convinced ſhe had deſigns of her own in thoſe proceedings, which I thought aroſe ſolely from diſintereſted kindneſs, I do not feel that affection for her which I did."

"Scarce, my deareſt friend! was I allowed to finiſh the laſt ſentence, before I was informed that the people and carriage appointed to conduct me hither were ready. I had no choice; my remonſtrances, my entreaties for time were not even liſtened to. I will not deſcribe my journey, in which I was attended only by a mulatto woman; for Juana was not allowed to accompany me, and as her children were ſlaves on the eſtate I have left, I would not have preſſed for her attendance hither, even had it been likely that it would have been granted. I was miſerable, even more ſo than I had ever been yet. Ah! ſurely, if ever you ſhould read theſe pages, many of them hardly legible, others blotted with my tears, you will be even weary of my miſeries, and my real diſtreſſes may have the effect of thoſe generally popular novels I remember to have read in England, of which I heard people

complain.

complain, that they contained ſuch a ſeries of impoſſible calamity, as to blunt at once compaſſion and curioſity. I write on, however, notwithſtanding this painful idea, which perpetually intrudes upon me. I write without knowing, and hardly daring to hope, that my narrative will be read by him for whom it is intended.

"I expected to have found my father, his elected ſon-in-law, and a friend of his, a clergyman (Heavens! *are* there in the church ſuch men as *he* is repreſented to be?), waiting my arrival; and —no, Denbigh, I dare not tell you the projects with which my mind was occupied, nor what I might perhaps have been driven to, had they been ſo aſſembled with a view to this deteſted ſale, which my father means to make of his unhappy child! I felt as if a weight, under which it would have been impoſſible for me to have ſupported myſelf, was ſuddenly taken from my mind, when I found

I found that this party not only was not there, but that they had yet ſent no notice of the time when they intended it. General orders of preparation had, however, been received; but that the dreadful alternative to which I might be expoſed was not ſo immediately to cruſh me, I was thankful. I ſlept with ſome tranquillity the evening after my arrival; and yeſterday, as the weather, particularly on this ſide the iſland, is comparatively cool, I had command enough over myſelf to detach my mind, for a little while, from the ſad ſubject of my apprehenſions, and examine the ſingular ſcenery with which I am ſurrounded.

"And it is, indeed, ſcenery ſo new and magnificent, that I muſt be quite cruſhed by my miſeries, if I could behold it without admiration. The houſe, a very indifferent one, is about three quarters of a mile from the ſea, of which there is from the front a noble view. To the ſouthward run out green pro-

promontories, covered with mountain palms and plantains, withall the ſingular appendages of Indian landſcape. Around the houſe here, contrary to the other part of the iſland, for land ſeems as of no more value than in Europe, is an incloſure like a ſmall Engliſh park; and here are many beautiful trees and ſhrubs; the tree jaſmine, the pomegranate and the mango; together with groups of oranges, lemons, lime, and ſhaddocks, that perfume the air with almoſt oppreſſive odours. Behind the houſe, and beyond this half natural ſhrubbery, riſe the mountains, which gradually increaſe in height to the diſtance of fifteen or twenty miles, where they ſeem to tower to the clouds, and of which many parts of them have, as I am told, never been viſited by Europeans. It is there, amid the foreſts of mahogany and ceiba, the Indian fig, and other immenſe trees whoſe names I do not know, and amidſt the deep gullies

with

with which thoſe towering ridges are interſected from the immenſe volumes of water that fall during the rainy ſeaſon, that the Maroons, thoſe people who have lately excited ſo much alarm, live ſequeſtered from oppreſſion, and are often able to iſſue from their ſylvan fortreſſes, and retaliate on their oppreſſors. Their community is frequently increaſed by fugitive negroes, and is lately become ſo formidable, that means have been deviſed wholly to extirpate and deſtroy them; which is, perhaps, very politic, but I can hardly think it juſt.

"As very great apprehenſions had been felt on the other ſide the iſland, on account of the depredations of theſe people, and as I am afraid, by all I can learn, that my father is among thoſe who, from the rigour of his proceedings, is very likely to be particularly obnoxious to them, I cannot help feeling ſome ſurpriſe at his chooſing his preſent reſidence, where it ſeems to me that his

his propertyand his family are much more expoſed to any injuries they are capable of doing. The nights are now more calm and mild, and the climate not much unlike the ſouth of France; at leaſt I love to recall that country, where I was happy, and where we firſt met. I ſat laſt night under a ſort of corridor that goes round the houſe. There was a ſolemnity in the ſcene, and in the ſounds, that I felt but cannot deſcribe. To the north, a heavy ſwelling ſea broke monotonouſly, though violently, on the rough ſhore; the rocks and caverns re-echoed to the thunder of the waves. In the meaſured pauſes of this burſt of water were now and then heard, among the woods that clothe the mountains, noiſes which, I was informed, are the ſignals uſed by the Maroons and runaway negroes to collect their numbers or hold their councils. Sometimes it was a few dull notes ſtruck in a particular manner on their gombay

gombay or drum, anſwered by the ſame number of ſtrokes from another quarter. At another time, it was the ſullen ſound of a great ſhell; which is, they ſay, uſed every where by the ſavages as a war ſignal; and this was anſwered by hollow human voices from different parts—Some I ſuppoſed to be very near the houſe, ſo near, that at any other time, I own, I ſhould not have thought of ſuch neighbours with indifference. But it is not for me, who momentarily expect the arrival of my father and his friend, to dread any other earthly calamity that can befall me.

"Had I not theſe very ſerious miſeries to overwhelm my mind, I ſhould feel more relief than I do from the abſence of many petty inconveniences which the ſeaſon and the climate occaſion. The muſkitos, againſt which none of the contrivances we have are entirely a ſecurity, are now no longer troubleſome; nor do the cock roaches, knockers, and other

other odious insects, now torment me as they did on the other side of the island. I have so little fear of the Maroons, who I am persuaded would not injure me, for I have never injured them, that I ventured out yesterday evening beyond the inclosure surrounding the house. I never saw any thing so beautiful as the woods, which are for some extent up the hills quite clear of bushes or thorns, and overshadow, not turf indeed, such as we sometimes see in England, but long and luxurious grass; among which creep the little lizards, green as animated emeralds, and not only perfectly harmless, but, as it is affirmed, friendly to the human race; and a sort of ground dove, still more interesting—while innumerable other doves and plovers find food and shelter among the trees above. I should, perhaps, have wandered much farther than prudence would have permitted, had day sunk gradually into night as it does in other latitudes;

latitudes; but here it becomes dark at once: and as I was haſtening back, yet dreading to enter the houſe, where I feared I might hear my father was arrived, I was ſurpriſed by perceiving ſudden flaſhes of vivid light darting about among the trees. As, however, they gave me no idea of any human contrivance, I was not alarmed; and it immediately occurred to me that they were fire-flies, and I remembered your having deſcribed ſome you ſaw in Italy. They are not common here, but among the mountainous and woody parts of the iſland; and I find the negroes have ſome ſtrange ſuperſtitious notions about them, as, indeed, they have ſome wild and abſurd impreſſion or other in regard to every object that ſurrounds them. It is weak and ridiculous, I know, and you, my friend, will ſeverely reprove me for it, if I ſhould ever be ſo fortunate as to know that theſe letters reach you. But I will not diſguiſe my folly: there are

times

times when the hideous phantaſies of theſe poor uninformed ſavages affect my ſpirits with a ſort of dread, which all my conviction of their fallacy does not enable me to ſubdue. Little Maria uſed to talk to me of their Obeahs, perſons who perſuade others, and perhaps believe themſelves, that they poſſeſs ſupernatural powers, acquired by I know not what operations, reſembling, as far as I could learn, thoſe of the witches in Macbeth round the magic cauldron. I afterwards fancied that the two or three the little girl pointed out to me had ſomething particularly horrid in their appearance; yet, as they are liable to ſevere puniſhment if their being Obi men or women is known, they carefully conceal any outward appearance of their profeſſion. But the mulattoes, and the unfortunate children belonging to them and white parents, who are brought up amidſt all the vices and ſuperſtitions of the negroes, are too apt to imbibe both

the one and the other; and what attempts have been made to give them other ideas, ſeem to me only to have made in their minds a ſort of 'darkneſs viſible.' Theſe Obi men and women are, as I have been informed, more numerous here than in the other plantations: and I ſhudder involuntarily when I fancy, from the myſterious looks and odd geſtures of ſome of them, that they are deeply initiated in theſe wild rites of ſuperſtition.

"Amponah was among the people who were appointed to attend me hither, and it is from him that I receive almoſt all the information I am able to obtain from any quarter. The poor fellow, from his reſidence in England and his attendance on my brother, has acquired more knowledge than the generality of the people of his colour; and all the attachment he felt for my brother, near whoſe perſon he was brought up, is very naturally transferred to me. As to my father,

father, he has conceived ſuch an extreme terror of him, owing, I believe, to ſome ſeverities that have been inflicted on him for trifling faults, that I have ſeen him turn pale and tremble when he has been ſpeaking of him; and while he has been telling me what he has diſcovered, or heard from others of people, of the intentions that have been formed as to the concluſion of my marriage, his agitation has been ſo extreme, that he ſuddenly became inarticulate, the big drops trembled on his forehead, and his breath became ſo ſhort, that he could not continue ſpeaking, but was compelled to leave the room to recover himſelf. Alas, Denbigh! to what a ſituation is your unhappy friend reduced, when her only counſellor is a poor negro ſlave! and when ſhe has no friendly boſom on which ſhe can rely for more rational advice, or to whom ſhe dares to confide the information he ventures his life to procure for her!

"I here break off. I lock my papers and your letters, Denbigh, into a very ſmall cabinet, made for me, of the fine woods of this country, by a brother of Amponah's; and I determine to ſend it to Mrs. Apthorp, Amponah having aſſured me he will find means to convey it ſafely, with a few words, the laſt perhaps after theſe that I ſhall ever write; for Amponah has diſcovered, that to-morrow evening my father, his friend, and a man who is called a clergyman, are to be here. Mr. Grabb, who is a relation, it ſeems, and protected by Sawkins, is already come, though he keeps himſelf out of my ſight; and preparations are ſilently making for the wicked, the inhuman ſacrifice!

"No, Denbigh! no. It will never, it ſhall never be. The wretched creatures of whom I have ſpoken, that paſs here for having the power to look into futurity, in vain declare that a marriage and great feſtival will ſoon happen here. A

funeral

funeral will be the feſtival, if there is any; for I can die. Miſery ſo overwhelming as that which threatens me will deſtroy me. I hear again the gombay in the woods; I hear the ſtrange yells as of ſavage triumph, and I ſhudder to think that there is no alternative. I muſt either endeavour to fly—yet whither, and to whom?—at the hazard of falling into theſe people's hands, or I muſt await the fate deſigned for me by my cruel, my unnatural parent! Oh, my dear, dear friend! how would your generous heart feel for your unhappy Henrietta, could her preſent calamitous condition be known to you! Should this reach you—(it cannot reach you till long after my deſtiny is decided, probably not till long after this poor form is periſhing in the grave)—forgive me, Denbigh! my errors (and ſeverely have they been puniſhed) were rather of my head than of my heart; the effects of prejudice rather than perverſeneſs. Den-

bigh! when ſome happier, ſome more deſerving woman is in poſſeſſion of that place in your affections which I was unworthy to fill, do not ſpeak of me with the indifference I deſerve; but recollect with compaſſion the poor Henrietta, whoſe laſt wiſh will be for your felicity. My tears—yet it is not always that I can weep—my tears blind me; and ſcarcely can my trembling hand make legible this laſt adieu."

LETTER

LETTER III.

THE narrative of the poor perſecuted Henrietta was here interrupted; and on my applying to my friend Denbigh for the ſequel, he thus related it, filling up the chaſm till ſhe again reſumed the pen:

"You ſee," ſaid he, "the date of this laſt letter. I arrived at Jamaica three days earlier than that date; and without any inquiry after my other friends, I haſtened only to inform myſelf of Henrietta: but the accounts I received bewildered for awhile, and then nearly diſtracted me. By ſome perſons I was aſſured ſhe had been married ſome time; by others, that ſhe had been ſent no one knew whither, by her father, for having poſitively refuſed to

accept the husband he had chosen for her. Kingston was, however, remote from any of Mr. Maynard's houses; and though the colonies in general are as much or more infested with tale-bearers and gossips than the provincial towns of England, it happened at that time, that public events materially affecting them, the increasing alarm from the insurgent Maroons, and an epidemical complaint of the most alarming nature, had co-operated to call off the attention of individuals from every thing but the preservation of their property and their families. And though Mr. Maynard was, on account of his fortune, one of the Assembly, he was very little beloved, and his daughter not at all known; and of what had befallen either the one or the other it was impossible to obtain correct intelligence where I was. I lost not a moment, therefore, in hastening to his principal residence on the other side of the island,

that

that to which Henrietta had been firſt carried. Arrived there, I inquired of the firſt negro I met for Mr. Maynard. The poor fellow appeared to be afraid of anſwering me; and upon my entreating him to ſpeak out, and aſſuring him I had buſineſs of the greateſt conſequence with his maſter, he pointed, with evident ſymptoms of apprehenſion, to the houſe of the overſeer, at the end of a row of palmetos, many of which had been blown down by a hurricane that had happened, he told me, in that part of the iſland three weeks before. 'None of the family ſuffered?' ſaid I eagerly. 'Only two tree negro kill,' replied the man. 'But Miſs Maynard, your maſter's daughter, where is ſhe?' The negro ſhook his head: 'No ſay, maſſa. One my ſhip-mate flog for make queſtion—for tell tings.' This myſtery was inſupportable. The manager to whom I was then compelled to apply was only a ſort of ſecond or third under the

chief deputy, who was, I found, abſent. This man ſeemed the moſt ſullen brute I had ever talked to; he either could not or would not give me any ſatisfaction whatſoever. I preſently became impatient, and inſiſted upon his telling me where I could ſpeak to his maſter; which he refuſed to do unleſs I would tell him my buſineſs. There was ſomething ſo ferociouſly myſterious in his manner, that my alarm increaſed, and I tried to conquer my indignation, while I ſaid, 'You will ſurely tell me, Sir, whether Mr. Maynard is at home?'—'I cannot tell you, Sir, what I do not know.'—'Is he here, on this eſtate?'—'No.'—'At which of his eſtates is he?'—'I cannot tell.'—'Where is his daughter?'—'I know nothing about his daughter.'—'Good God, Sir! you can tell me whether ſhe is married or ſingle?'—'She was to have been married as laſt Thurſday; but I do not know that ſhe was.'—'Where, Sir,' continued I in

increaſed agitation, 'was the ceremony to have taken place?'—'At Mr. Maynard's northern plantation.'—'And did it not take place?'—'I—I—really, Sir, theſe queſtions from a ſtranger are ſomewhat extraordinary. I do not know, Sir, that you have any right to aſk them; but, be that as it may, I have no authority to anſwer them. Your ſervant, Sir; I wiſh you a good day.' The worthy manager then retired to his *ſangarie*, and, turning away in inexpreſſible mortification, I was about to inquire of ſome of the negroes; but a ſervant from the manager's houſe followed me, and at a ſignal he made every perſon diſappeared; and none, I was perſuaded, would have anſwered my queſtion, had I found an opportunity to put it. Half frantic, I ſtopped merely to argue with my impetuous paſſions on the neceſſity of patience and reſolution; reſolution, without which it ſeemed to be impoſſible for me to know, or, knowing, to endure, the

extent of the misery to which I might be condemned. Henrietta married under circumstances of compulsion; or, Henrietta forgetting me, and throwing me from her affection for ever, were almost equally terrible to my imagination: yet, so truly did I love her, that it was less terrible to believe her faithless to me, than the sad victim of her father's inhuman tyranny. If, said I as soon as I could reflect, if she has broken for ever all those ties which united us, I shall, it is true, be wretched. But time will enable me to look with calmness on the conduct of a woman, who, if she could so act, could never deserve the tenderness I have felt for her. If, on the contrary, she is condemned by her cruel and brutal father to throw herself into the arms of a man she abhors, to become a legal prostitute to a contemptible wretch whom she must loath and abhor!—The very idea is so hideous to my imagination, that it would be impos-

ſible for me ever to ſuffer the reality; and I ſhould undoubtedly ſacrifice to my vengeance the monſters that had dared to uſe the eſtabliſhed forms of life in violation of every principle of moral or human rights. Alas! all theſe meditations, far from forwarding any project for the relief of my poor Henrietta, ſerved only to render me incapable of aſſiſting her. I felt my brain inflamed by the violence of my emotions. I became giddy and confuſed; yet, determined not to aſk, what would probably have been refuſed, a moment's repoſe at the houſe or among the people of Maynard, I rode forward not knowing where or why. The hotteſt ſeaſon was now at hand: the ardour of a tropical ſun, darting on my throbbing temples, was, though I was myſelf almoſt inſenſible of it, not long to be endured with impunity. Even the poor faithful black ſervant, who followed me on horſeback, was nearly overcome; when, arriving

arriving at that part of the country where the blue mountains begin to be very ſteep, and are cut with wide and deep gullies, my horſe, quite exhauſted with fatigue, (for I had heeded his corporeal feelings no more than my own) fell with me in a very rocky and ſtony road, and I know not what became of me for many hours.

"This happened in the country which was actually the ſeat of the Maroon inſurrection. I knew very little of it. I had inquired after nothing, I had thought of nothing, but Henrietta! My ſenſations therefore, if perſonal ſafety had been the object of my ſolicitude, would not have been very comfortable, when, awaking from inſenſibility, I found myſelf ſurrounded by men of colour, whom I immediately knew, as well by their appearance as by the place where they were, to be Maroons and runaway negroes, and from whom it was likely I ſhould receive as little mercy as had been

been by the generality of my countrymen ſhewn to them. They appeared, however, to be adminiſtering remedies to the hurts I had received by my fall; and Ambo, my ſervant, perceiving that I was ſenſible, uttered an exclamation of joy, and, kneeling by me, wept like a child. I underſtood, that when he ſaw me fall, and found I was ſeverely hurt, he ran into the woods, whence he imagined he perceived the ſmoke of negro-houſes, and had ſoon fallen in with a party of armed Maroons and blacks, to whom, without attending to their hoſtile appearance, he had briefly related my misfortune, and entreated their ſuccour. Theſe men were lying in wait for a ſmall detachment of militia, who, they had been told, were to paſs that way; and it was only his agitation for my ſafety, and the extreme ſimplicity of my ſervant, that convinced them I was not, what they had at firſt ſuppoſed, one of the officers of that militia. They followed

lowed my ſervant to the place where he had left me, and I was now their priſoner; yet a priſoner towards whom they were diſpoſed to ſhew every ſort of kindneſs, on the report of my ſervant, whoſe honeſt ſolicitude for me convinced them I was not one of thoſe whom their unfortunate race have reaſon to purſue with execrations and with vengeance. I ſoon recovered recollection enough to endeavour to avail myſelf of their favourable diſpoſition towards me. I repreſented to him who ſeemed to have the greateſt authority among them, that more than my life depended on my being ſuffered inſtantly to depart; and when he aſked an explanation, I briefly related whither I was going. Appealing to all of nature that oppreſſion had left in the hearts of theſe wild people, I told them of the force which I had reaſon to dread would be put on the inclinations of the woman I loved, and to whom I had been betrothed

trothed in England. I obſerved, that when I named Mr. Maynard, and ſaid that I was going to his northern eſtate in hopes of preventing this accurſed marriage, they looked ſignificantly at each other; and at length one of them, who appeared to be more ferocious and leſs conſiderate than the reſt, told me, that to haſten whither I was going was utterly uſeleſs, becauſe it was now ſome days ſince that plantation had been deſtroyed, in retaliation for the cruelty with which their people (the Maroons) had been purſued, perſecuted, and puniſhed by Mr. Maynard. I felt my blood run cold to my heart at this information, and hardly had ſtrength and courage to aſk, what became of the perſons who were in the houſe, when it was, as I underſtood, ſet on fire? The ſame man anſwered, that the women and ſlaves were carried up the mountain—Maynard himſelf was not there—They had been miſinformed as to the time of his

his arrival to celebrate the marriage of his daughter, on the very day of which they intended to have ſtruck the blow; but having gone too far to retreat before they were aware of their miſtake, they had executed their plan as far as it related to the deſtruction of his property, and the captivity of his family, reſerving their vengeance againſt him perſonally till they could completely gratify it.

"While the man continued to ſpeak, I was become half frantic from the crowd of terrific ideas that ruſhed on my mind relative to Henrietta. She was releaſed from the power of Maynard only to fall into that of ſavages, always terrible in their paſſions, and in whom the fierce inclination for European women was now likely to be exalted by the deſire of revenge on a man ſo deteſted as the father of my unhappy Henrietta! I cannot—no, my friend! I will not attempt to tell you what were at that moment my feelings. Yet, dreadfully acute

as

as they were, I knew it was abſolutely neceſſary for me to diſguiſe them. Henrietta might yet live; and however wretched it was likely we ſhould both be, I could not determine to abandon her, though I were ſure to find her diſgraced and undone. I could die with her —(for I knew ſhe never would ſurvive the horrors I dreaded for her)—I could die with her, if to live for her were denied. Once certain, therefore, and I ſoon was but too certain, that Henrietta was carried to the faſtneſſes among the mountainous foreſts, where the Maroons held impregnable ſtations, I no longer ſought my liberty. I endeavoured only, by means of Ambo, to prevail on my captors to allow me to go with them; and they were aſſured that I would remain as a hoſtage, while Ambo ſhould be diſpatched to bring them an ample ranſom, and that I would, in the mean time, ſubmit to the reſtraint of following their party whitherſoever they went.

"Captain

Captain Degomai, the commander, to whom it was left to decide on my deſtiny, took ſome time to conſider of my propoſal, and at length told me, that he could not entirely aſſent to it. The offer of a conſiderable ranſom had its weight: yet how could he truſt to the faith of Ambo, who ſeemed ſo attached to me, and who, inſtead of returning, might bring the enemy to their ſtrong holds, and utterly undo them? That propoſal, therefore, he muſt reject; but he would take both myſelf and my ſervant up the country to the woods, and conſult with his chiefs while, on my tranquil ſubmitting to my impriſonment, and not attempting to make myſelf maſter of any of their ſecrets, it muſt finally depend whether I ſhould be treated as an enemy or a friend. I found all remonſtrance would be in vain; but delay in any way was death to me. It happened, however, an alarm was given at that moment, that a large body

body of regular forces and militia, aſſembled by the gentlemen neareſt to the eſtates that had lately ſuffered, was rapidly advancing with artillery towards their principal fortreſs; and a ſcout came from their main body with this intelligence, and orders from their Maroon general to haſten thither with all poſſible ſpeed. This appeared to be a very unfavourable moment for me; and under ſome circumſtances it would have probably happened that I ſhould have been ſtabbed, or ſhot at once, to prevent all inquiry or the hazard of my eſcape; but Ambo, who had found means to make himſelf much beloved among them, had, by this time, diſcovered his near relation, a brother by the ſame father, who was a ſort of ſecond in command; and, I believe, that circumſtance ſaved my life. I was, however, marched up the country as a priſoner; while the agony of my mind, dwelling continually on the fate of Henrietta, ſo far rendered

me

me unconſcious of perſonal ſuffering, that I neither felt the fatigue of ſuch a march, or the pain from my bruiſes. I hardly heeded what was ſaid; I hardly felt my own ſituation, and remembered I was a captive only becauſe it prevented my throwing myſelf at all hazards into any place where it was likely my dear unhappy girl might be found.

"I was conſcious that my life hung but by a thread; the ſlighteſt ſuſpicion was ſufficient to deſtroy me; and more than one of the party, whoſe priſoner I was, regarded me, as I could plainly perceive, with diſtruſt. Occupied, however, by one object, my own danger became indifferent to me; and I appeared to be ſo totally inſenſible to every thing, which, if I had any invidious deſigns, would have attracted my attention, that during our march my captors gradually became leſs careful of confining me amongſt them. On the ſecond evening, while they ſtill lingered around the woody region of a moun-

mountain, for reaſons which I did not comprehend, and dared not inquire into, the whole party ſat down at night-fall under a high chain of rocks, which formed a natural and almoſt inſurmountable barrier to the higher grounds, unleſs to thoſe who knew the winding and rugged paths which led among them. The men produced two ſmall caſks of rum; and while ſome went to fill their calabaſhes at a ſpring, which guſhed through the cliff, glittering in the moonbeam as it fell, others made a fire, and prepared the pork and kid, which they had brought, with yams and bananas. I ſhall never forget the group as they appeared beneath the bright light of the moon then at full. The ſtrange dreſſes, where Indian nakedneſs was oddly intermingled with military ornaments; their dark faces, and that peculiar look of ferocity which the eye of the negro rolling in its deep ſocket gives to the whole race of Africans, and which was,

in

in one inſtance, rendered more ſo by the plumed helmet of an Engliſh ſoldier, whom the black had killed and ſtripped; in another by a ſort of turban, from which waved the ſcarlet feathers of the mackaw; and in a third by part of an old uniform, and a laced hat. I ſtood leaning againſt an excavated rock behind them, liſtening with increaſed anguiſh to their converſation, as the ſpirits and good cheer began to make them noiſy and unreſerved. I had, from a boy, underſtood a little of their wild jargon, and now fancied they ſpoke of their women, and of white women whom their chief had made captives in their late excurſion among the plantations to the north. I looked at Ambo, to whom I dared not ſpeak apart, for any converſation between us was, I found, offenſive; but I was ſure, from the countenance and geſtures of Ambo, that he underſtood their diſcourſe better than I did, and that it related to Henrietta.

This

This terrible certainty, ſince every hope that it might not be ſo ſeemed now to be at an end, quite ſubdued my fortitude, and I ſunk almoſt ſenſeleſs on the ground. Poor Ambo obtained for me a glaſs of their rum, and was kneeling to adminiſter it to his apparently dying maſter, when a ſudden ſhout in the woods below ſuſpended at once the ſavage mirth of the Maroons; they liſtened, but it was not repeated: yet every man flew to arms. A ſcout immediately ſprang forth to diſcover whence proceeded a noiſe which they knew was not made by friends. Hardly, however, were theſe precautions taken when a volley of ſhot was fired amongſt us. It killed two, and wounded five; among whom was my poor Ambo, as I afterwards found. No deſcription can do juſtice to the hideous yells which now reſounded among the rocks and woods. The aſſailants and the aſſailed mingled their cries, which were returned and

deepened by the hollow caverns. Another volley from the ſtill concealed foe ſilenced for ever ſome of the moſt clamorous; and the reſt being driven to deſpair, their natural and acquired fierceneſs of character urged them to ſuch revenge as was yet in their power; and the man whom I had conſidered as a ſort of ſecond in command, and in whom I had obſerved ſymptoms of peculiar malignity, ruſhed with another towards me, and, each ſeizing an arm, hurried me away into the thickeſt covert of the wood near them, exerting ſuch ſtrength and agility as I could not perhaps have effectually reſiſted at any time; but enfeebled as I was, yet animated by the hope that I might reſcue Henrietta, if I could ſpeak to the armed party who had made the aſſault, I ſtruggled with my utmoſt power to diſengage myſelf; when the place we were in being choked with trees and pieces of rock, it was impoſſible for the men to compel me to go on;

and to conſult at once their ſafety and their vengeance, one of the negroes drew a dirk he wore, and ſtabbed me twice. The firſt blow penetrated my arm, the ſecond my ſide; and imagining he had killed me, or not daring to ſtay to complete his work, he and his companion fled, and left me weltering in my blood. I was not, however, inſenſible, and had ſufficient preſence of mind to endeavour to ſtop the blood which guſhed from the wound in my ſide, while I liſtened attentively in hopes of hearing the hoſtile party, who would be friendly to *me*, approach; but after a tumult of ſome moments, and ſome converſation in which I ſuppoſed it was diſcuſſed whether they ſhould purſue the fugitives, their voices as they deſcended among the woods were more faintly heard, and then gradually died away. The only poor hope I had ſeemed to periſh when I no longer diſtinguiſhed the voices of the Engliſh ſoldiers. I collected, however, all my ſtrength, and endeavoured

to get up and follow them: but though I was upon my feet, and able to ſtand ſupported by a tree, yet in a moment my eyes grew dim, my head giddy, I concluded my death immediate, and, faintly uttering the name of Henrietta, ceaſed to think or to breathe. I lay ſome hours in that ſtate; for when I recovered myſelf it was the dawn of day. My wounds had ceaſed to pour forth the blood in which I found myſelf lying; but I was deadly ſick, and for ſome time unable to recall diſtinctly what had happened. With conſciouſneſs returned my intolerable anguiſh; and I figured to myſelf my wretched Henrietta under ſufferings which maddened my brain. I knew not what I did; yet I crawled with extreme difficulty to the ſcene of the preceding night's attack, and with horror beheld the diſtorted countenances of ſeveral Blacks and Maroons who had been killed; while among them I diſtinguiſhed, with the greateſt regret, the face of my poor

poor Amo, who had periſhed for his attachment to me. Sinking to the earth, I believed myſelf about to follow him, when, in the woody cliffs above, I heard the ſound of thoſe ſavage inſtruments by which the Maroons call to battle, and I doubted not but that they were coming down in force to meet the party who had attacked them. If I was perceived, it was probable that my exiſtence would end amidſt the moſt excruciating tortures: and wretched as I was, the inſtinctive love of life, or rather dread of ſuch a death, urged me to attempt my eſcape. I crept, therefore, again into the deſcending woods, in a direction oppoſite to that whither I had been forced by the Maroons. My progreſs was ſlow; for I was ſo weak, that I was compelled to drag myſelf along by holding the trees on either hand. Yet even thus heavily advancing fatigued me ſo much, that I felt my wounds beginning to bleed afreſh; and that I

ſhould again faint, if I could not ſtaunch the bleeding. I gathered ſome leaves, and, folding one on another, applied them to my wounds, which I thought I perceived would not be mortal, if the loſs of blood they occaſioned did not exhauſt me. On theſe high regions there are few cocoa or other fruit-bearing trees; but I found ſome of the fruit called ſweet ſop, which for a while extremely refreſhed me. I continued to creep on, being ſometimes under the neceſſity of reſting for many minutes; and in theſe intervals I anxiouſly liſtened to the noiſes which would give me any information of the motions of thoſe whom I now conſidered as my murderers; and from whom, if they tracked me, I imagined it to be impoſſible to eſcape. But it was high noon, and the continual buzzing of the muſkitoes and other inſects made it impoſſible for me to diſtinguiſh any diſtant ſounds, while their ſtings greatly increaſed my torment;

torment; and the heat, notwithſtanding I was among high grounds, was ſo oppreſſive, that it was almoſt impoſſible for me to proceed. Yet to obtain any repoſe was equally impoſſible; and deſpair of being able to ſave my unhappy Henrietta added ſo ſeverely to my perſonal ſufferings, that I hardly retained my ſenſes, the cruel agony I endured being ſuch as I could not long ſuſtain and live. An inſatiable and tormenting thirſt added to my bodily pain, and the fruits I found were inſufficient to allay it. I liſtened for the ſound of water, and at laſt thought I heard it murmur in the gulley below. But in my ſituation, an attempt to follow a deſcent of near a hundred yards, which, but for the trees and ſhrubs, would have appeared almoſt perpendicular, was by no means eaſy. Theſe gulleys I knew to be the peculiar lurking-places of fugitive negroes, who had fled from their maſters without having yet had courage or op-

portunity to join the inſurgent Maroons; and I might perhaps meet with ſome who might quickly put an end to my faint and almoſt involuntary ſtruggles to preſerve a worthleſs or miſerable exiſtence.

"Once more, however, exerting myſelf to the utmoſt of my power, rather from inſtinct than reaſon, I began to attempt deſcending this fearful chaſm. The bolls and branches of the trees ſuſtained me, while the roots, ſtarting in many places from the rock, gave me a footing which the rock itſelf often denied. I believe I was almoſt three hours laborioufly reaching the bottom of this chaſm. I did, however, reach it, and threw myſelf more than half dead on the high and luxuriant graſs, or rather reeds, which bordered a ſmall rapid ſtream, whoſe ſpring was far on the cliffs above. When I had recovered my breath and recollection, I eagerly turned to the water; and with my hands, for I had no

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hat or any thing elſe by which to convey it, I endeavoured to appeaſe the conſuming thirſt which devoured me; and never did the pure element adminiſter its refreſhment to lips more parched, or weakneſs more oppreſſive than what I ſuffered. Quite overcome by exceſſive exertion and loſs of blood, which always diſpoſes to ſleep, forgetfulneſs ſtole over me. The dark receſs where I lay ſeemed never to have been trodden by human feet, and monkeys, parroquets, and doves appeared to be the undiſturbed proprietors of the ſoil. But had there been veſtiges of more hoſtile inhabitants, I was no longer capable of calculating my danger, and the body refuſed to ſupport any longer the overwhelming agonies of the mind. Had I been told that I could ſleep for many hours (for now I really ſlept) without once remembering that Henrietta was loſt to me for ever, and was in all probability ſuffering indignities which were

infinitely worſe than death, I ſhould have ſpurned at the ſuppoſition as a calumny moſt derogatory to every feeling of affection or honour. Yet there is a period of ſuffering when the moſt active mind ſinks into torpor, and the vital principle alone keeps up the languid pulſation of the heart. Even this degree of life I ſhould not have retained, had I not been in the very ſtrength of youthful manhood, and poſſeſſed a ſound and unbroken conſtitution.

"In the partial inſenſibility I had thus fallen into, fancy was at length buſy; and after ſome hours I imagined that a perſon ſtood by me, ſpoke to me in a friendly voice, touched my face and hands, and bade me try to riſe. The viſion was confuſed, and ſoon diſappeared. Yet a ſecond time it came, and a ſecond time faded into air. Again I imagined this compaſſionate voice murmured in my ears: and that a man of my own colour and country ſtood near

near me, chafing my temples and hands. I opened my eyes, and perceived a human figure, but a very unuſual one; and ſtill believing myſelf in a dream, I looked round me, ſaw the objects I had ſeen before I ſlept, and recovered a ſort of confuſed conſciouſneſs of all that had happened, and of the place where I was. The figure, ſeeing that I was ſenſible, then ſat down by me, and inquired who I was, and by what chance I came in that condition into ſuch a place? I tried, but in vain, to anſwer his queſtions coherently. He perceived how unable I was to ſatisfy his curioſity; and aſked me, if with aſſiſtance I could riſe from the ground? I found it very difficult, as well becauſe of my weakneſs as the ſoreneſs of my limbs. At length, however, I found myſelf able to move, leaning on my friendly conductor; and after walking, or rather creeping, along among bruſhwood and mangroves, on the edge of the rivulet, which were

ſometimes ſo thickly interwoven, that it was to me a moſt laborious taſk to get through them, we arrived at a narrow path up the precipice, which might be almoſt called a ladder of rocks. I climbed, or rather was dragged up with conſiderable difficulty by my conductor, till ſuddenly I ſaw one of thoſe caves ſo frequent in theſe mountains, and uſually the abode of thoſe giant bats which are found in the tropical regions, or of wild pigeons; and often of wretched negroes, who hazard the want of food, or live by nightly plunder, to eſcape from puniſhment or oppreſſion. The place I now ſaw, however, was in ſome degree accommodated to the reſidence of a being of another deſcription; and when I looked around it, and beheld its inhabitant, the fable which had moſt delighted my youth occurred to me, and I imagined myſelf in the inward apartment of Robinſon Cruſoe. My

new

new friend was an Engliſhman, between fifty and ſixty: his complexion was that of one who had lived much in hot climates, and his features bore the traces of ſome deep affliction. It was eaſy to perceive by his manner, and the tones of his voice, that his education had been that of a gentleman. His dreſs was not much unlike the coſtume of ſome religious orders, except that his robe was of the blue cotton, woven and dyed by the negroes, and his grey hair was covered by a large hat of woven ſtraw or reeds, not unlike thoſe worn by peaſants in ſome parts of Italy. He ſeemed unconſcious of the ſingularity of his appearance, and how much ſurpriſed I muſt be to ſee ſuch a perſon in ſuch a place: but, attentive only to my wants, he haſtened to dreſs my wounds, which he performed with the ſkill of a ſurgeon; then furniſhed me with a ſlight repaſt of caſſada bread, yams, and chocolate, not allowing me to take any thing ſpiritous. He gave me

ſome,

ſome of his own linen, which was extremely refreſhing; and forbidding me to ſpeak more than to tell him my name, and that in croſſing the country I had fallen into the power of the Maroons, he led me to an encloſure hung with matting within the rock, where there was a mattreſs on the floor, and ſome cotton bedding, on which bidding me repoſe myſelf he left me. Repoſe, however, it was impoſſible to obtain. I looked round me by the light of a ſmall lamp fed with palm oil, and could hardly perſuade myſelf that all that had paſſed was not a dream, from which I was not yet awakened. I raiſed myſelf on the arm of which I had ſtill the uſe, and liſtened, trying to aſcertain if I was really in poſſeſſion of my ſenſes. I found myſelf now able diſtinctly to carry my mind to the progreſs of my ſufferings; and then the cruel recollection of Henrietta, loſt for ever, came with all its former force, and I ceaſed to think of myſelf,

myſelf, or to recollect that I perſonally ſuffered. It immediately occurred to me, that my new friend might know ſomething of the late tranſactions of the Maroons; for it ſeemed difficult to conceive how a European could live, as he appeared to do, in the very midſt of their receſſes, without being, if not their aſſociate, at leaſt one who knew how to conciliate them—or to inhabit ſuch an abode would have been impracticable. Again I liſtened; but beſides that it was now night, the intervention of the rock prevented my hearing any thing without but a dull indiſtinct murmur of the land-wind among the high trees riſing above it.

" My ſpirits became more and more active, and I believed myſelf capable of riſing, ſeeking my incomprehenſible hoſt, and relating to him the cauſe of my wanderings, and the great ſource of my diſquiet; when, having crept to the ſort of door, compoſed of reeds, joined ſome-

ſomething in the manner of the ſences with which we encloſe our melon-grounds in England, I thought I heard two perſons in the outer cave converſing; and though they ſpoke in a very low tone, I fancied one of them was a woman. On a ſudden they ſeemed to be alarmed at ſome noiſe, and I held my breath leſt it ſhould have been my approach that put an end to their conference. One of them I could hear glided away; for I now found the reeds were in ſome places broken, and in others might eaſily have been removed by the hand; but it was too dark for me to diſcover who the other perſon was whom I had for a moment heard converſing with the hermit of the cave, for ſo I called him, not knowing indeed to what deſcription of being he could be ſaid to belong.

"My movements were not ſo ſilent but that my hoſt heard me. He appeared, on opening the door, to be aſtoniſhed to find

find me able to move, and gently remonſtrated with me on my imprudence. I anſwered him, by ſaying, that I was aſhamed of having ſuffered perſonal conſiderations to detain me a treſpaſſer on his humanity, while a dearer intereſt, the welfare of one for whoſe preſervation my life would be readily relinquiſhed, was probably in a ſituation which I could not think of without being driven to phrenſy. While I ſpoke, my agitation became ſo great, that my new friend, believing I ſhould fall led me to a ſeat on one ſide of a table, while he ſat down oppoſite, and in a firm yet ſoothing voice bade me remember, that to ſuffer was the lot of man, and that ſuperiority of mind was ſhown only by ſuffering well. There was a lamp on the table between us; his hat was off, and I now ſaw a countenance where the hand of miſery had deepened the traces marked by the lapſe of almoſt ſixty years. Yet it was one of thoſe faces on which

which the eye loves to dwell, while it gives confidence to the heart. There was, however, a peculiar though tranſient wildneſs in his eyes, while he thus ſpoke: 'I have been,' ſaid he, 'ſo wretched a wanderer in this world, that, quitting it as far as was in my power, I no longer conſider myſelf as one of its inhabitants. Yet here, even here, amid the mountainous foreſts of a tropical iſland, does the voice of miſery reach me. Hither am I purſued by the ſight of ſufferings and of ſorrows which man brings on man!'

"He pauſed, and ſeemed to await a reply—I was in no condition to give one.

'Miſery,' continued he, 'is, indeed, the certain concomitant of ſlavery. It follows with undeviating ſtep the tyrant who impoſes, and the ſlave who endures the fetters. Are you of this country, Sir? or are you one of the military ſent from England?'

"A brief yet incoherent account of what

what and who I was followed. I added the ſhort ſtory of my ſeparation from Henrietta, and the hopes of ſaving her from a deteſted marriage, with which, not knowing much of the ſituation of the country, and totally careleſs of any conſequences to myſelf by travelling through it, I had hurried away from one of Mr. Maynard's houſes to the other. The friendly recluſe heard me with ſurpriſe, which was, I thought, accompanied by an expreſſion of countenance very different from that of concern. He ſeemed to be conſidering of his anſwer, when the conchs and gomgoms of the Maroons ſuddenly broke the ſilence of the night, and appeared to be very near the habitation of my protector. He changed countenance; but immediately recovering himſelf, he put out the lamp, and ſaid in a low voice: 'Theſe people, though in a ſtate of warfare againſt Europeans, are not inimical to me. They are uſed to ſee me, and know that I take no

part

part againſt them; but it will not be ſafe for you to be ſeen. Retire, therefore, to your mattreſs, remain quite ſtill, that, ſhould any of them enter this place as they ſometimes do, I may appear to be as uſual—alone.' I heſitated not to do as he bade me; yet I own I was very far from being at my eaſe, when I heard three or four hoarſe voices ſalute my hoſt in a language of which I underſtood nothing but two or three words, and thoſe hoſtile, borrowed from the negro Engliſh of the colonies. My friend anſwered them in the ſame jargon in a mild and manly tone; and offered them, as I imagined, ſome kind of ſpirits, which they accepted. Some of them laughed immoderately, ſhouted, and clapped their hands, appearing to deſcribe ſome recent ſucceſs, and ſounding to my ears like expreſſions of barbarous triumph. Perhaps they were relating their having poſſeſſed themſelves of the daughter of Maynard, after having ravaged his eſtate.

eſtate. I found this apprehenſion ſo terrible, that I could not long have remained tranquil; I think, had no conſideration for my kind protector interpoſed, I ſhould have ruſhed out to have met death, rather than ſuſtain the horrors of my imagination in regard to Henrietta. But it fortunately happened that their arrangements for the night did not allow them to ſtay long; they apparently went away, and ſilence followed their wild clamour, ſave that drums, as of other parties about to aſſemble at ſome place of general rendezvous, were remotely heard about the mountains. Within the ſtrange abode that ſheltered me, all ſoon became profoundly quiet, ſo much ſo, that I began to doubt whether the inhabitant of the cave had not himſelf been compelled to accompany them, or, thinking he might mitigate their ferocity, had voluntarily been of their party. My ſenſations were in the mean time the moſt

uneaſy

uneaſy and inſupportable. Nature was abſolutely exhauſted by fatigue and loſs of blood, yet it was impoſſible for me to take the repoſe even of a moment. Again I liſtened, and then, impatient of the uncertainty and ſuſpenſe, again ventured to creep on my hands and knees to the door; and by attentively laying my ear to the vacancies in the reeds, I thought myſelf ſure that the maſter of the habitation was no longer in that part of it where we had converſed; he was then, perhaps, retired to ſome other part where he ſlept (for I had obſerved another paſſage worked in the rock, and ſecured by another door of reeds or canes); yet it ſeemed inconſiſtent with his humane and manly bearing that he ſhould leave me, after ſuch an alarm, to paſs a ſleepleſs night in uneaſy conjectures. The longer this uncertainty continued, the more I became perſuaded that for ſome reaſon or other my friend had found it expedient to leave his hermitage

mitage with his late unwelcome viſitors; and in that conviction I ventured ſoftly to open the door which he had ſhut upon me. There was no other light than what the brightneſs of the night afforded, through a ſort of circular opening above the door; but in theſe regions, and at this ſeaſon, the innumerable ſtars, and a ſky without a cloud or a vapour, afford ſuch clear viſion, that I had no difficulty in immediately aſſuring myſelf my new found friend was not there. It was certain then that he was either gone with the Maroons, or had retired to ſleep; and it was very material to me to know to which of theſe circumſtances his abſence was owing. I ventured, therefore, to try whether the door which I ſaw at the end of the cavern would yield to my efforts. The faſtening was a ſimple latch lifted by a ſtring, ſuch as is frequent in cottages in remote parts of England. This door, which I ſhut after me, did not, as I expected, lead immediately

mediately to another excavation of the rock, but opened to a narrow paſſage, juſt wide enough for one perſon to thread it at a time. I paſſed *a pas de loup* along it for about thirty yards. It then ſeemed to narrow; but I was now in total darkneſs, and the hand alone of that arm I could uſe was my guide. I came at length to what appeared to be rock, and to bar my further progreſs. I was, after ſome moments of unſucceſsful examination, about to return, when on one ſide, within a cavity, I felt that there were reeds ſuch as the outer doors were compoſed of. This then probably led to the place I was ſearching for. I found a ſtring ſuch as opened the other doors, and, pulling it, entered a larger apartment than I had yet ſeen. The light came from the roof, which was glazed like ſky-lights in England; but the creeping plants and the high trees above it little obſcured the window. I could notwithſtanding diſcern that on one ſide

the room lay on a mattreſs a human figure. I took it for granted it was my friend, who, overcome with fatigue, had retired without thinking it neceſſary to aſſure me of ſafety, which, on the departure of the Maroons, he might not ſuppoſe I ſhould doubt. Almoſt aſhamed therefore of having doubted, and unwilling to intrude upon his repoſe, I was about to withdraw as ſilently as I had entered, when I ſtepped on ſomething I knew not what, and I was afraid I might make a noiſe if I entangled myſelf among it. I ſtooped therefore to remove it, and to my aſtoniſhment found in my hand the ſmall ſatin ſlipper of a woman!

"Almoſt involuntarily I looked on the figure I had till then taken for my ſleeping friend. The moon was now high enough to afford more light than had been lent by the ſtars that preceded her; and earneſtly fixing my eyes on the face of the perſon extended before me, it

ſeemed—(gracious Heaven! was I not ſtill in a dream?)—it ſeemed to be the face of Henrietta—of my own long-loved, loſt Henrietta!

"I uttered an exclamation of aſtoniſhment, and the uneaſy ſlumber of her I ſaw fled inſtantly. Thoſe eyes whoſe every look was imprinted on my heart were uncloſed with an expreſſion of dread and amazement. They beheld, as Henrietta ſuppoſed, a ſtranger, even whoſe colour, as I bent my head over her, ſhe could not by that light diſtinguiſh. She uttered a faint ſhriek; and terror ſo immediately poſſeſſed her, that ſhe became incapable of hearing what I, kneeling on the ground beſide her, attempted to utter. I knew it was Henrietta; but I was in too great confuſion of mind to be able to aſk, had ſhe been in a condition to reply, how ſhe came there, or what had befallen her. I will not attempt, therefore, to deſcribe the ſenſations of that moment, or the incoherency

coherency of our firſt attempts to relate to each other the hiſtory of a period I trembled to inquire into, and believed Henrietta would never live to relate; for, no ſooner was ſhe aſſured it was Denbigh who ſpoke to her, than ſhe appeared to be ſo overwhelmed by a variety of afflicting emotions, as to loſe the power, if not of utterance, of clearly expreſſing her thoughts; and ſhe continued to preſs my hand, and in a low and tremulous voice to implore me to forgive her. This ſcene was interrupted by a noiſe ſullenly echoing along the narrow paſſage that led to the outward cavern. I felt a degree of fear which throughout my life I had never been ſenſible of before. The Maroons, with whom I now ſuppoſed my hoſt was an aſſociate, were, I concluded, returned, and Henrietta was to be their victim. Of my own life, which would have been undoubtedly the firſt ſacrifice, I thought not: nor do I claim any

applauſe on that account, either for fortitude or courage. Abſorbed in one idea, the danger of the creature deareſt to me on earth, my own preſervation, though it has been called the firſt law of nature, was not even recollected; and whoever has fondly loved an amiable object by whom he was beloved, will eaſily underſtand how little every other conſideration influenced me. Having rapidly conceived the idea that the perſons I dreaded were without, and that by oppoſing them I might afford Henrietta the means of eſcape, or at leaſt die without witneſſing her ſecond captivity and diſgrace, I ran, more than half frantic, through the narrow paſs, and, unarmed and weakened as I was by my recent wounds, ruſhed into the outward excavation, where I ſaw its inhabitant alone, having apparently juſt lit his lamp; and with a countenance of aſtoniſhment, he inquired where I had been, and why I was thus diſordered?

"Amazed and aſhamed, for his queſtions immediately reſtored to me ſome power of reflection, I ſaid ſome incoherent words—I hardly know what. 'I underſtand you,' ſaid he: 'impatient at my abſence, you have ſought me, and, in doing ſo, have met another. Is it not ſo?'

"'It is,' I replied; 'and that other—'

"'Is Henrietta,' interrupted he; 'is that Henrietta whom you love, and have ſo ardently ſought. I knew it from the moment you related to me your name and your ſituation.'

"I gaſped for breath: the violent agitation of my ſpirits prevented my ſpeaking. I dared not aſk, 'How came Henrietta here?—What has ſhe ſuffered?—In whoſe power is ſhe now?'

"My hoſt, however, entered at once into my meaning. 'Be more calm,' ſaid he; 'I know all the terrors that poſſeſs you; for I alſo have loved, and have been wretched, more I truſt than you

ever will be. You have unexpectedly found her whom you ſought; but in a moment ſhe may be torn from you for ever!——You muſt know, from what has juſt paſſed, that this place is not ſecure. Do not, therefore, let us waſte the time in wondering or lamenting. Even while we ſpeak, danger may be impending which would overwhelm us all.' He ſpoke this in a low and ſlow manner, liſtened at intervals, and extinguiſhed his lamp. 'Speak very low,' ſaid he, 'or rather retire for the moment without ſpeaking. I will go to Henrietta, and appeaſe the fear ſhe muſt be in.' He aroſe, and left me in darkneſs, while thoſe doubts and ſuſpicions returned which I had been a moment before aſhamed of having felt. I dared not, however, move; for not my life only, but that of a being infinitely dearer to me ſeemed to be in the hands of him, into whoſe power chance had ſo unaccountably thrown us both. What could he be?

be? By what ſtrange chance or choice did he live in ſuch a place, where he muſt either be in perpetual apprehenſion from the revolted Negroes and inſurgent Maroons, or in league with them? Surely, notwithſtahding the mild candour of his appearance and his apparent humanity, this myſterious being muſt be a criminal, who ſhelters himſelf from juſtice by means of the hoſtile ſavages among whom he dwells! Henrietta! her name ſeemed familiar to him—He acknowledged that her ſtory was known to him—He could have heard it only from herſelf—She muſt then have been ſome time with him!—I relate theſe queſtions with more preciſion than I at that time made them. They paſſed confuſedly through my mind, and I now determined to interrupt the conference which the ſtranger was holding with Henrietta—now trembled at my own raſhneſs, and ſaid, I *may* deſtroy her by it; but if ſhe is already loſt to

me, I cannot retrieve my own deſtiny. It is ſo impoſſible to convey to another the ſenſations which at that moment agitated my heart, that I will not attempt it. They were vague, tumultuous, confuſed, and painful beyond any that I had hitherto experienced.

" Breathleſs, undecided how to act, and almoſt doubting my ſenſes, I liſtened, and, trembling, approached the entrance to the inward cavern. I fancied I heard the ſobs and deep ſighs of Henrietta. It was enough; all my attempts at prudence and patience were forgotten; and once more I penetrated the receſs, and ſaw, for there was now a light, the ſuppoſed hermit kneeling beſide the miſtreſs of my heart, apparently expoſtulating with her. She ſat on her mattreſs weeping, and, as it ſeemed, expoſtulating alſo. The noiſe I made, however, on entering, made them both look towards the door. The ſtranger continued to hold one hand, while Henrietta, extend-

extending the other towards me, faintly uttered my name. Perhaps no human being was ever ſhaken by a more extraordinary variety of violent emotions than at that moment aſſailed me. Henriettta, however, appeared to be agitated by other paſſions than thoſe with which I was diſtracted. Eagerneſs to clear up a circumſtance which ſhe ſaw I miſunderſtood, fear of the conſequences of my headlong impetuoſity, and doubts of her own power of explanation, combined to deprive her of the little ſtrength ſhe had left. Perhaps ſome recollection of the coolneſs there was on my part when we laſt parted, might add to her uneaſineſs and embarraſſment. 'Denbigh!' ſaid ſhe in a faint voice, 'Denbigh! I beſeech you to hear me, to hear this our good friend, who has been in the hands of Providence the means of ſaving me from the moſt terrible evils. Denbigh, my beſt, my firſt friend! help me to thank him. I am poor, even in

thanks!' By this time the hermit had ariſen, and ſaid 'Henrietta! if Mr. Denbigh will command himſelf and hear reaſon, I ſhall be able to explain to his ſatisfaction all that now appears extraordinary. If he will *not*—but I do not ſuppoſe it'——I own, that almoſt for the firſt time in my life I was over-awed by a conſciouſneſs of ſuperior reaſon and rectitude. My breath was oppreſſed; my head became confuſed, from the contrariety of emotions that aſſailed me.

"My benevolent friend, into whoſe boſom I doubted whether I ought not to have plunged a poniard, took advantage of my indeciſion. 'It is no time,' ſaid he, 'now for explanation: your life, and, what I have no doubt is dearer to you, the life and honour of Henrietta, ſaved once almoſt by miracle, depend on our inſtant reſolution. I dare not let either of you remain here two hours longer. Let it not be ſaid, that a delicate woman can, in a caſe of neceſſity, exert

exert the virtues of fortitude and patience, to which you, Denbigh, are unequal: but I perſuade myſelf that you will, each for the ſake of the other, forget every thing but the neceſſity of prompt reſolution and execution.'—'What muſt I do?' cried Henrietta, making an effort to riſe: 'what is there I will not try to do, when you my benefactor direct me?'

"'We muſt haſten from hence,' ſaid the recluſe, 'inſtantly. I have now for three days baffled the ſuſpicions which I think I plainly perceive are entertained by the Maroons and their adherents, as to my having an inmate here. It was to obviate thoſe ſuſpicions that I to-night accompanied them nearly to the foot of the mountains. They are gone on an expedition in which it is highly probable they may be ſucceſsful. It is equally probable that, intoxicated with ſpirits, and rendered careleſs of every conſideration by ſucceſs, they may

return, and, even if their doubts are not renewed, demand of me refreſhment and repoſe. I can neither evade nor deny their requeſt, and a diſcovery muſt inevitably enſue.'

" ' Let us go,' cried Henrietta, exerting as it ſeemed all her ſtrength. ' Let us not, I implore you, loſe a moment.' She aroſe and approached me. ' Denbigh!' ſaid ſhe, ' is it really Denbigh I ſee, or a phantom ſent to mock my miſery? Will you then abandon me?'— ' Never,' anſwered I, ' though I believe myſelf every way the moſt wretched of human beings!'— ' Is this a time,' exclaimed our hoſt with ſome degree of indignation, ' to indulge lamentation, or torment oneſelf with conjectures? While you heſitate, Sir, we are loſt! I ſay *we*; becauſe my own ſafety is hazarded by the ſhare I have had in reſcuing this dear unhappy girl from the moſt hideous evils. Yet I name not that as a motive to haſten you, for I ſet not my life at the value

value of a ſtraw. I ſeem again to be thrown among my ſpecies, only to be convinced anew of their worthleſſneſs.' —'Well, Sir,' interrupted I, 'what am I to do? I no more wiſh to waſte time in needleſs words than you do.' Henrietta was now wrapped in a ſort of capot, and prepared to go. Our hoſt put away every veſtige of any one having been with him in his hermitage; lit a candle in a dark lantern; and having inſiſted on our ſwallowing each a glaſs of rum, he took Henrietta's arm within his, and, bidding her be of good courage, deſired me to follow him, and we left the hermitage.

"Inſtead of taking the moſt obvious of the narrow paths that led from it, he ſtruck into one hardly perceptible, which went almoſt perpendicularly down the woody declivity, where the trunks of pimento and mahogany trees were not ſo thick as their boughs were ſhadowy

and

and extenſive. We walked in profound ſilence, each occaſionally aſſiſting Henrietta, who could only ſlowly make her way along ſo ſteep and rugged a path; I was near our conductor, and plainly perceived that he was extremely agitated, and could hardly conceal his apprehenſion; when Henrietta ſuddenly uttered a faint ſhriek, and clung to us both with every mark of extreme terror. It was the ſcintillation of the fire-flies that alarmed her, as they now glittered and were now loſt among the trees; and though ſhe had ſeen them before, they ſeemed to her terrified imagination to be the lights of her purſuers. Our march was fatiguing and tedious. I ſaw Henrietta ready to ſink; and though we between us rather carried than led her, I doubted whether it would be poſſible for her to proceed. Sometimes we were compelled to let her reſt for ſome moments, each of us ſupporting her; and each appeared to avoid ſpeaking to the other, yet to be equally intereſted

intereſted in her ſafety, and to attend with equal ſolicitude to her faintly whiſpered anſwers to our anxious inquiries. In one of theſe pauſes we heard the Gombay ſullenly and ſlow in ſingle meaſured ſtrokes, and apparently not very far off. The moment was terrible; our conductor tremblingly urged us to haſten on, and fear again conquered the ſenſe of fatigue in my unfortunate Henrietta.

"I would have inquired whither our myſterious guide was conducting us? but as I had no power to change whatever reſolution he had taken, I might have done harm, where to do good was beyond my power. Again we reſumed our march; the way became rather eaſier; and our friend endeavoured to raiſe the failing courage of poor Henrietta, by aſſuring her the greateſt difficulty was conquered, and that we were not far from a place of ſafety.

"Day,

"Day, however, broke in all its ſplendour, juſt as we quitted the thickeſt ſhade of the trees, and emerged into a valley, lovely as fabled paradiſe. Shadocks, limes, and wild oranges, perfumed the air, and the yellow ſtar-like bloſſoms of the graceful tamarind enriched the ſummits of its long flexible boughs. Wretchedneſs like mine has no eye for beauty. I ſaw the Eden around me illuminated by the bright rays of morning only with dread, leſt the rapid ſtream that hurried through this receſs, and the wild fruits with which it abounded, ſhould have tempted thoſe to frequent it whom it muſt be death to us to meet.

"But our conductor ſeemed not to feel the ſame apprehenſions. 'It is now,' ſaid he, 'that my fears abate; the people we have reaſon to dread are probably retired to their faſtneſſes in the caverns of the foreſt, and I truſt we ſhall eſcape

eſcape them. While we were yet among the woods I extremely apprehended meeting either parties of them, or ſingle ſtragglers ſilently creeping along theſe obſcure paths to reach their principal rendezvous in the mountains. Come then, my friends, within a mile is a place of ſecurity.' Henrietta thus encouraged renewed her exertions, and after walking another hour we approached a ſmall neat houſe, ſituated in the midſt of a cotton plantation. Our conductor bade us wait a moment without; he returned almoſt immediately, and introduced us to a middle-aged decent-looking woman, who ſeemed by her manner to be a dependent on our ſtrange acquaintance. He recommended Henrietta to her immediate care; ſhe was indeed ſo overcome by fatigue and fear, that ſhe could not much longer have ſupported herſelf. She conſented therefore, at our joint entreaties, to withdraw. When ſhe was gone, my yet nameleſs companion,

companion, whom I could hardly now conſider otherwiſe than my friend, ſaid, 'The gentlewoman of this houſe is the widow of one of my overſeers. She has ſome obligations to me; ſhe is grateful; and if the few negroes about her are faithful, or, if they are otherwiſe, but can be kept in ignorance of Henrietta being in the houſe, her perils, and I truſt yours, will be at an end.'

"This ſpeech, by making me ſuppoſe the ſtranger was himſelf a planter of the iſland, redoubled my aſtoniſhment at all I had obſerved. He gueſſed at my thoughts: 'I ſee,' ſaid he, 'that I excite your curioſity; this is not a place nor a time to gratify it. It is neceſſary for me to return as expeditiouſly as I can to my hermitage: for you, repoſe, and ſome attention to your wounds, are, I am perſuaded, ſtill more neceſſary. But you will not, I imagine, thank me for my care, if a propoſal to ſeparate you from Henrietta be annexed to it.'

"I inter-

"I interrupted him. 'No, Sir, I will not quit the ſpot where ſhe is, let the conſequence be what it may. All the wretchedneſs we have ſuffered has been owing to our ſeparation. Diſgraced, undone, as perhaps ſhe is, I will now ſtay near her till——My fate at leaſt will ſoon be decided, after hers is known.' The recluſe then left me with an air of compaſſion; he ſaid he would give directions for my accommodation, and that I ſhould ſee him again in a few days.

"The good woman of the houſe ſoon came to me herſelf, and brought with her a ſurgeon who uſually attended her people. He applied remedies to my wounds, which were by this time in a very uneaſy ſtate, though I had for the laſt few hours been quite unconſcious of them. He recommended quiet; and I ſuffered myſelf to be led to a ſmall upper room, where I conſented to attempt taking ſome repoſe, on the aſſurance that Henrietta was much recovered,

vered, and, being convinced of her preſent ſafety and of mine, that ſhe had fallen into a profound ſleep. I now underſtood that it would be adviſeable to conceal my being in the houſe from every one but an old mulatto woman, on whom my hoſteſs could depend, and who was to bring me food. I endeavoured then to calm my over-wearied ſpirits; but it was impoſſible. Every circumſtance, from my firſt encounter with the Maroons to my preſent ſituation, appeared like the dream of a fevered imagination. If fatigue overcame the tumult of my ſpirits, the reſpite was only momentary. I ſtarted from this tranſient forgetfulneſs, and my bewildered ſenſes awake only to ſcenes of horror, repreſented Henrietta in new perils, and I was flying to reſcue her or periſh in the attempt. Not, however, to play the egotiſt, and dwell too long on my own feelings and ſufferings, I haſten to the fortunate period when my friend

friend and protector re-appeared. I had been perſuaded not to ſee Henrietta, but not till I was ſatisfied of her ſafety by a note written in her own hand, in which ſhe conjured me to follow implicitly the directions of our hoſt of the hermitage; 'who has,' ſaid ſhe, 'been under Providence the means of ſaving your Henrietta from the moſt deplorable evils, and who is ſtill I am convinced occupied in ſecuring our ſafety.'

"Henrietta did not then tell me that her fears of her father returned the moment others of a yet more hideous deſcription ſubſided. From both the one and the other, however, ſhe was in a great degree relieved by the appearance of a ſtrong military eſcort from St. Jago de la Vega; the commanding officer of which preſented to each us of a few words written by our excellent friend, in which he informed us he had ſent a carriage for our conveyance to the protection of the Governor, and ſuch a force

force as would preclude the hazards that might otherwise have made our journey unsafe or uneasy. Once more I mistrusted my senses when I found myself seated by the side of Henrietta. Yet in her altered countenance and tremulous tones there was but too much evidence of the reality of her sufferings; and the cruel fears of the past that had so distracted me, now recurred in despite of my reason; nor, whatever effort I made, was I able to conceal from the object of them, the variety of apprehensions that tormented me. But when Henrietta understood me she could only say, 'Denbigh! I have suffered a great deal; more perhaps, yes, surely more, than even my folly and my mistrust of you deserved. But if I live, it will be to prove to you the sincerity of my repentance: and Denbigh surely will not suppose she could wish to live, if t he person of his poor Henrietta was become an object of abhorrence to him. Nor

would ſhe have ſurvived even till now the diſgrace which *might* have befallen her.' Relieved by this declaration, and ſhocked to have given riſe to ſuch oppreſſive and diſtreſſing feelings as I ſaw agitated the boſom of my beloved girl, I commanded myſelf during the reſt of our journey, and we arrived in ſafety at the ſeat of government. Henrietta was received into the houſe of a gentleman, to whoſe wife our myſterious friend had recommended her; and one of my own former acquaintance waited our arrival, to conduct me to apartments he had prepared for me in his own houſe.

" My eagerneſs for information could now no longer be reſtrained. I found that one of Mr. Maynard's plantations had been deſtroyed by the Maroons, (to whom he was particularly obnoxious,) joined by ſome of his own runaway-negroes; that, urged to more than his uſual extravagance of paſſion by this outrage, he had indulged his vindictive temper

temper in great and unjuſtifiable ſeverities towards the people upon all his eſtates; ſeverities which ſerved only to irritate the minds even of thoſe who had till then moſt faithfully adhered to him. At length the inſurrection ſuddenly ſpread to the northern plantation, whither Mr. Maynard was returning to celebrate the compulſatory marriage of his daughter. He heard what had happened, ſome miles before he approached it, and haſtened to a ſmall encampment of Britiſh troops which had been ſtationed at the foot of the mountains, waiting a reinforcement before they made a general attack on the ſtrong holds of the enemy. Having prevailed on the commanding officer of this detachment to accompany him with his ſoldiers, they approached the plantation, where a ſcene of devaſtation and horror awaited them. The Maroons, who had not yet retired, met them undauntedly, and repulſed them with conſiderable loſs. Mr. Maynard

His intended ſon-in-law waiting no longer fled back with the intelligence. The military, after conſiderable loſs, returned to their camp; and of the fate of Henrietta as nothing was known certainly, the moſt terrible conjectures were formed; and ſhe had been reckoned among the moſt lamented victims of this diſaſtrous warfare, till intelligence had been received of her being at the widow's houſe, and an eſcort demanded to conduct her from thence in ſafety.

"I found that he who informed me of theſe particulars knew no more. He was neither acquainted with the circumſtances of Henrietta's danger, nor by whoſe means ſhe had eſcaped it. And when I reflected that ſhe muſt have been two or three days in the power of the enraged and unreſtrained ſavages, from whom the mountain recluſe had, I knew not how, reſcued her, my horrible apprehenſions returned, and it was with difficulty I concealed from the friend

with whom I was converſing, the thoughts that ſhook me with dread.

" The following day, however, I received a note from my myſterious friend, deſiring to ſee me at a place he named not far from the town. ' I cannot,' ſaid he in this ſhort letter, ' mingle in ſociety without ſo much pain, that I know you will not heſitate to meet me here, unleſs the ſtate of your health ſhould make it inconvenient to you.' I was too deſirous of ſeeing him to ſuffer any perſonal conſiderations to prevent me. I found the recluſe in a ſmall habitation near a pen, where the people appeared to treat him with great reſpect. His aſpect was calm and benign: I imagined that his looks were thoſe of compaſſion, and that he was conſidering how to palliate the blow I ſhould receive when the whole of poor Henrietta's diſaſtrous ſtory ſhould be known to me. Determined to attempt bearing my miſeries like a man, I ſtifled the anguiſh of my heart,

and

and endeavoured to oppoſe with all my fortitude the effect of the certainty of evils worſe even than death. I obſerved a profound ſilence. My ſingular acquaintance thus began:

"'I have perceived, ever ſince your interview with Henrietta, (which I wiſhed, had it been poſſible, to avert, till I could have prepared you for it,) that you have conſidered me as a ſtrange and equivocal being, whoſe intentions in regard to you both were ſuſpicious. She knows nothing more of me than that I am her friend, and have fortunately proved her deliverer from a ſituation of extreme peril. Had ſhe been merely what I, when I firſt ſaw her, believed, an unhappy young woman, I ſhould not with leſs zeal have endeavoured to ſerve and protect her; but judge, Mr. Denbigh, of the additional pleaſure I felt, when I found I had from ſuch diſtreſſes as had environed Henrietta

reſcued my niece, and almoſt the only relation I have in the world.'

"I expreſſed aſtoniſhment and ſatisfaction. My friend thus proceeded:

"'My hiſtory is ſtrange. To the young, to the unexperienced, it will appear almoſt incredible. I will brieſly relate it; becauſe, though I have ſubdued the firſt and moſt acute feelings that once accompanied retroſpection, I am not yet enough maſter of myſelf to enter without pain into the hiſtory of my hopes, my diſappointments, and the errors that were the conſequence of having too much indulged the one, and of being too eaſily depreſſed by the other.

"'Though I was a younger brother, I inherited a fortune that many elder brothers might have coveted. I was, like other children of fortune from the colonies, ſent to England for what is called education, at ſo early an age that I recollect little of my childhood; except that,

that, from my having two young negroes to wait on my caprices, and to enact my horſes, my dogs, or any thing elſe I required, to indulge my indolence, and ſubmit to my ill-humour, I really imagined myſelf to be a creature of a ſuperior order, whom it was the buſineſs of all other creatures to venerate and to obey. My reception at the merchant's to whom I was (with my elder brother, ſundry hogſheads of ſugar, bags of cotton, and planks of mahogany) conſigned, was ſuch as made me ſuſpect I was not a perſon of ſuch immenſe importance in the great city of London, as I had fancied myſelf on the plantations of my father in Jamaica. I was equipped with Engliſh habiliments; a ſum which I thought a very pitiful one put into my pocket, and forthwith diſpatched with my brother, under the care of one of my guardian's clerks, to Harrow School. As I could hardly read Engliſh, it was utterly impoſſible I could

learn the rudiments of Latin; as I could not write my own name, it was ſtill more impoſſible that I could execute the taſks, ſimple as they were, that were aſſigned to me. But as my father was a rich Jamaica planter, there was no doubt of my bills being paid, however extravagant; and my deficiencies were therefore overlooked, while I was thruſt on from form to form; ſometimes flogged, and ſometimes paying other boys to do my taſk, and ſave me from flogging. Out of ſchool, my life was far enough from being pleaſant. My elder brother, who was heir to a fortune thrice as large as that which in right of my mother (whoſe name I was to take,) was, on coming of age, to belong to me, had been uſed to exerciſe the caprices of a very bad temper on half a dozen African boys and girls. He now found no one willing to ſubmit to any whim which he choſe to entertain: but, if he was impertinent he was *ridiculed*, and if he

he was inſolent he was *beat*. Nay, ſo far was he from being able to command, that he was compelled to obey; and, from being a tyrant, found himſelf reduced to be himſelf a ſlave: for, by dint of thumps and blows from boys ſo much bigger than himſelf that reſiſtance would have been in vain, he, who had from his earlieſt recollection been ſo triumphantly maſter of every one about him, was now under the hard neceſſity of becoming ſhag, fag, ſkip, or whatever the boys in the higher forms choſe to inſiſt upon. This, however bad it was for him, was a great deal worſe for me; for, in proportion as his chagrin increaſed, ſo did his deſire to revenge himſelf upon ſomebody elſe; and unhappily no other perſon was diſpoſed to bear it, and certainly not one was compelled to bear it, but me. On me therefore fell the weight of his diſpleaſure; and as he was a great deal bigger, and three years older than I was, I aſſure you my perſonal ſuffer-

ings were not inconſiderable. At length my frequent black eyes, bruiſes which prevented my writing or even going into ſchool, and violent bleeding at the noſe, excited inquiry; and as I had no inclination to diſguiſe the truth, and other boys were willing enough to tell it, for they all deteſted my brother, I was at the recommendation of the maſter removed to another ſchool; but to this circumſtance (for we are the creatures of accident) I perhaps owe that abhorrence of tyranny and injuſtice which I have invariably felt through the reſt of my life.

"My condition was ameliorated by my removal, and no longer fearing for my *life*, I began to find that I had a *ſoul*; at leaſt that I had feelings and affections worthy of aſpiring to rank above the ferocious animals to whom I had hitherto been ſubjected. I was a tall lad of almoſt eighteen, and had been about four years at a private ſchool, when orders came

came from my father to ſend me to Cambridge. Thither therefore I went, extremely to my own ſatisfaction, yet but little to my claſſical improvement; for the diſadvantages under which I had begun to learn, always adhered to me in ſome degree, and impeded my progreſs. My brother was at Oxford; but that we might never meet, and our enmity or rather his tyrannny be renewed, I did not go at the vacation to my guardian's, but was received at his deſire by a ſiſter of his, a widow of moderate fortune, who, beſides a ſon, who was one of my friends at Cambridge, had three daughters. The arrangement was natural enough, circumſtanced as I was, but on their parts it was not altogether without deſign.

" The three young ladies were all pretty. The youngeſt, who was not above fifteen, I thought eminently beautiful. Simple, and ſoft in her manners, very fair, very blooming; well made, though

not tall; with fine flaxen hair waving luxuriantly over her face; beautiful teeth, and lips of coral: theſe were charms more than enough to faſcinate ſuch a boy as I was, who had my head full of romance, and a heart which found itſelf diſpoſed to love any human creature who would invite its confidence and return its affection. As my pecuniary value was well underſtood, I met with no diſcouragement; but after my affections were not only ſuppoſed to be irrevocably, but really were madly fixed on Miſs Fanny, I was told by her mama, that our acquaintance muſt be ſuſpended till my father was written to, and his conſent obtained to our union. I was not of an age or of a diſpoſition to hear reaſon, had reaſon been preſented to me. I knew that on my majority, to which I wanted hardly three years, I ſhould be independent, and poſſeſs an ample fortue, and already I determined to be free. It was not difficult for me to

to obtain preſent money, as my proſpects of fortune were generally known. I had no great difficulty in prevailing on my lovely Fanny to elope with me. We were married at Gretna Green, and returned to her mother, where I had not much doubt of the pardon that awaited us.

"The year of our union was undoubtedly the happieſt of my life. I had a ſon born within that time, whom I conſidered with a degree of infantine fondneſs; and before the intelligence of my marriage could reach Jamaica, my father died: ſo that I not only eſcaped any remonſtrance, but found myſelf entitled to a very conſiderable addition to my fortune. We reſided at one of the pleaſanteſt villages in the neighbourhood of London. Fanny, though perſuaded by her mother that ſhe was unable from her extreme youth and delicacy to ſuckle her infant, was yet a moſt tender and attentive mother, and paſſed almoſt all

her time in the nurſery, where her cares and pleaſures were increaſed by the birth of a daughter. My felicity was too perfect to laſt.

"One of my wife's ſiſters was about this time married to a very opulent merchant in the city. Succeſsful commerce had long ſince ſet him above the neceſſity of reſiding near the ſpot where it was carried on, and his bride became the miſtreſs of a moſt ſplendid houſe in one of the faſhionable ſtreets near St. James's. The mother, a very vain and weak woman, whoſe moderate circumſtances had hitherto reſtrained her expences, now indulged herſelf in every kind of diſſipation, and encouraged it in her daughters. It was not therefore ſurpriſing that the infection reached my wife, who was yet hardly eighteen, and that before ſuch examples the ſoberer habits of domeſtic life gave way. She was often invited to ſtay ſeveral nights together in town, either with her mother

or

or her ſiſter, that ſhe might enjoy the amuſements of London, which till now ſhe had hardly ever been preſent at: they had therefore all the faſcination of novelty; and Fanny ſoon diſcovered, that the village where we reſided, and where her greateſt ſatisfaction had hitherto been found in her children and her garden, was terribly inconvenient, dull, and even vulgar, ſince no perſons of faſhion ever lived ſo near London. Her mother ſupported her in her attempts to perſnade me to quit it, and to take a very elegant houſe, which happened at that period to be vacant near St. James's. They repreſented to me, that with my fortune the world would reflect upon me if I did not live as other people did in a certain ſtyle: and the elder lady, forgetting how lately ſhe had rejoiced at ſo well diſpoſing of a young woman whoſe beauty was her only portion, told me, with ſome aſperity, that *her* daughter was not to be conſidered as

one

one who was to be a mere domeſtic animal; that ſhe was calculated to ſhine in the *genteeleſt* circles; and it was a matter of ſurpriſe to all my friends, but ſtill more to hers, that I had never appeared to feel the pride which muſt ſurely be mine, when ſo fine a creature as my Fanny could be exhibited as my wife.

"When firſt this ſtyle of talking was adopted, it was in hints and innuendoes. The good lady my mother-in-law rather talked at me than to me; and the reſt of the family conveyed their ſentiments ſtill more in the *mezza voce*. By degrees, however, as I appeared determined not to underſtand them, they ſpoke plainer, and returned ſo unremittingly to the charge, that my patience, if not my reſolution, began to be ſhaken. Yet I could have reſiſted all theſe importunities had I not ſeen the cruel effect the pernicious doctrines they enforced had on my wife; that cheerfulneſs and even infantine gaiety which uſed to charm

charm me, eſpecially when I ſaw her playfulneſs and ſpirit dedicated to the health and amuſement of my children, was now quite loſt, and inſtead of it I was repulſed by ſilence, ſullenneſs, and tears. Accuſtomed to domeſtic life at a period when moſt young men yield to the wildeſt exceſſes, I felt the whole ſyſtem of rational happineſs ſinking for ever. I ſaw my lovely little ones neglected, and their mother eſtranged from them and from me. I might certainly have continued to live where I did, and have compelled my wife to remain with me; but I could not recall that genuine and unadulterated taſte for the duties of a wife and a mother, which had ſo barbarouſly been deſtroyed by thoſe who ought to have honoured and cheriſhed it. I feared I muſt thenceforth be miſerable myſelf: but I could not determine to ſee my Fanny avowedly ſo, when ſhe had been taught to think, however falſely, that it was in my power to make

make her happy. There was beſides a hope that, ſatiated with what ſhe now ſuppoſed pleaſures, and finding the empty adulation of a crowd but a poor ſubſtitute for the conſciouſneſs of doing right, for the delights of maternal love, and the affection of a huſband who adored her, ſhe would ſoon return diſguſted by the fallacy of her new purſuit, and be reſtored to herſelf and to me.

"I conſented therefore, alas! with what foreboding reluctance, to the plan ſo aſſiduouſly recommended. My family removed to a ſplendid houſe in one of the moſt faſhionable ſtreets in the moſt faſhionable part of London. My ſervants were more numerous, more ſuperbly clad, and more expenſively ſupported and paid. I had three carriages, inſtead of a coach and garden chair, in which I uſed to drive my wife about in the green and pleaſant lanes around our former reſidence; and my houſe, moſt magnificently furniſhed, under the immediate

mediate direction of my mother-in-law, was soon so constantly filled with company, that I was no longer at home in it; and had it not been that I had insisted on having one of the best bed-chambers converted into a nursery, and reserved one of the back parlours for a library, I should not have had a room in it where I could have found even the shadow of the pleasure and the repose I had lost. My wife was never at home unless on those days when she saw company, or had dining parties, at which I was expected to sit at the bottom of the table, to entertain men with whom I had no feelings or sentiments in common. Officers of the guards, with an infinity of vanity and vice, but a 'plentiful lack of wit;' fine feathered and helmeted heroes of the cavalry, (in which department of the army my wife had a brother,) who, out of the mere routine of their profession, had fewer ideas than I had ever believed any of God's

God's creatures could be furniſhed with; and men of yet another deſcription, members of parliament, who had obtained ſeats, every body wondered how, for purpoſes that nobody could be ignorant of—their aſſociates, whoſe whole fortunes conſiſted in their birth, their faſhionable manners, and their ſkill at play. A conſiderable number of very beautiful women were of theſe aſſemblies. Fanny had very early diſcovered that her face and form might fearleſsly challenge every compariſon, and ſhe appeared to delight in collecting around her thoſe who, when ſhe was not preſent, were looked upon as the firſt in beauty and elegance.

"I now never met her but fatigued with the vigils of the preceding night, or in haſte leſt ſhe ſhould miſs ſome delightful party on that which was approaching. Our meals, our chamber, were no longer in common. Her mother, her ſiſters, or her brother, who was ſo

ſo good, uninvited by me, whenever he was in London, to make my houſe his home, were, one or other of them, always with her, even at thoſe hours that the moſt diſſipated give to domeſtic ſociety. I attempted to check all this by perſuaſion. I was not liſtened to. I repreſented how inadequate my fortune, affluent as it was, muſt prove to ſuch a ſcale of expence as our preſent eſtabliſhment was extended to. I was reproached with parſimony. I beſought the mother of this young and thoughtleſs victim of vanity to conſider to what ſhe was dooming her innocent grandchildren; but ſhe was ſo weak, that my remonſtrances produced anger and reſentment inſtead of conviction and reform. The wild career of folly was continued, till the arrival of ſummer exchanged the ſcene on which it was acted; and the ſtill patient and enduring huſband was only the firſt of her ſuite, with whom 'the beautiful Mrs. Maynard' appeared

appeared at a ſummer reſort, where health is the pretence for collecting numbers who continue with very little variation the ſame life they have led in London during the winter.

"It may appear ſtrange that a man of my then age, for you recollect how young I married, ſince which ſcarce four years had paſſed, ſhould not have been drawn into the vortex, while he tried to ſnatch from it his murdered happineſs. But ſo cruelly had the fatal change in my wife's temper and manners lacerated my heart, that I felt a degree of abhorrence toward every one who had contributed to it; and though I ſometimes conſtrained myſelf to appear at my table with calmneſs, my reſolution carried me no farther; while I have more than once accidentally caught from the men with whom that table was ſurrounded, half and bye words uttered to each other, which I doubted not were terms of ridicule. I was repreſented as

moroſe,

moroſe, covetous, jealous, and weak; and I perceived that, more and more eſtranged from her duty and from me, my wife conſidered me rather as her jailor than her huſband. My ſiſter, the ſame whom you knew, and to whom Henrietta owes her education, at that time returned from the Continent, where her health and her inclination often induced her to reſide for two or three years. She was a woman of ſenſe and ſpirit, and could not imagine how it was that I poſſeſſed ſo little of either, as to ſubmit to the diſcreditable if not diſhonourable conduct of a woman, who was ſhe thought bound to ſhew me both gratitude and affection. She undertook to talk to her; but the effect of her remonſtrance was as I foreſaw it would be. My wife heard her with impatience, and anſwered her with aſperity. The conſequence was, that my ſiſter renounced me and my houſe for ever; and I was thus deprived of the only

friend I had left, to whom I could ſpeak of the miſery of my heart. Had I not ſtill loved my unhappy Fanny, and had not my children been moſt dear to me, I could have thrown her off for ever, though I believed her perſonal fidelity was yet without a ſtain. But whenever I thought of ſeparating the mother from the children, though ſhe ſeemed to have forgotten ſhe was their mother, I trembled leſt I ſhould be deſtroying for ever the fabric of happineſs with which I had ſo delighted my eyes and flattered my imagination, and which I fondly hoped was yet to be repaired. For a little while longer, therefore, I reſiſted the ſharp reproaches and exhortations of my ſiſter, who, though ſhe no longer ſaw, often wrote to me, I checked the natural impetuoſity of my temper, which, however patient it may hitherto have appeared to you, is by no means unlike that diſpoſition uſually and with juſtice attributed to Weſt Indians; and I tried once mor

more what effect the friendly yet forcible remonſtrance of the father and the huſband would have on a heart which, beating in ſo lovely a boſom, I could not, I would not, yet believe was become callous to the ſacred claims of nature towarde my infants, and of tenderneſs and gratitude towards their father.

" It is uſeleſs now to conjecture whether the repetition of this experiment would have ſucceeded; for juſt at that time an event took place which conſiderably changed the ground on which it was made. The huſband of that ſiſter of my wife's, ſince whoſe apparently affluent marriage my ſcheme of felicity had been deſtroyed, ſuddenly became inſolvent. The ſuperſtructure of his dazzling fortune, raiſed on a frail and faithleſs foundation, ſunk at once. To avoid prolixity, ſuffice it to ſay, that his ſchemes, which perhaps only himſelf underſtood, were calculated either to raiſe him to princely proſperity, or plunge him

him into the loweſt abyſs of ruin; while his giddy thoughtleſs wife, who never dreamed that ſhe was ſporting over a ſmooth and glittering ſurface, which a breath might diſſolve beneath her, was ſo ſuddenly ſtruck with the cruel reverſe, that ſhe fell into a ſtate of mind more deplorable than even phrenſy itſelf. Within a few days her huſband was in priſon; and her children, whom ſhe had ſent at a very early age to ſchool, that ſhe might avoid the trouble of taking care of them at home, were conducted by the reſpective maſters and governeſſes back to a houſe of which the Sheriff's officers were now in poſſeſſion; and which all the ſervants had forſaken, each taking the firſt thing of value they could appropriate, as the only chance they had of obtaining any remuneration for their ſervices. In this terrible exigence it was to me that the unhappy family turned their eyes for ſuccour. My wife, in all the anguiſh of repentance, humbled

bled herſelf at my feet. Her mother who had lately been ſupported in affluence very much above her former condition of life by her now undone ſon-in-law, ſunk, like other feeble minds, under this ſhock to her vanity and ambition; while the unhappy man himſelf conjured me from his priſon to ſhelter his unhappy children, and to viſit though he could not aſk me to relieve him.

"Even the bittereſt enemy ſupplicating for mercy can diſarm a generous mind of every deſire of vengeance. The unfortunate people who thus threw themſelves on my compaſſion, I had long been accuſtomed to conſider as thoſe who had occaſioned all my unhappineſs; but I now ſaw them rendered wretched themſelves by the conduct that had occaſioned my wretchedneſs; they had been even more their own enemies than mine. I ſilently forgave their errors, and actively engaged in the buſineſs of relieving their misfortunes.

Notwithſtanding the expences which my wife's late conduct had brought upon me, my fortune had rather increaſed than diminiſhed; for, though I had for ſome years lived beyond my income, the money thus ſunk had been very lately more than replaced by the legacy of a brother of my mother, who, dying in this iſland, where he had conceived an unconquerable averſion from my elder brother, left me not only an eſtate as large as that I before poſſeſſed, but a conſiderable ſum of money in the Engliſh funds, with plate, jewels, and other perſonals to a great amount. I thought therefore I could, without injury to my two children, engage in an undertaking which I believed would not only be in itſelf meritorious, but, by reſtoring me to the affection of my ſtill adored Fanny, be the means of giving me back the happineſs I had loſt. I need not enter into the particulars of my proceedings for this purpoſe. In about two

two months Mr. Halwyn was releaſed from his confinement. A compoſition was made with his creditors. He was permitted, as I was become his guarantee, to purſue thoſe branches of commerce in which he had ventured too far, but which might now by perſeverance repay the hazard and even the loſs he had incurred. I inherited from my uncle an houſe and well-conditioned eſtate in Dorſetſhire. Thither I now propoſed to retire with my family, as well as *that* I had taken under my protection. There was ample room for both, and the mother and ſiſter of my wife, the latter of whom was now in a ſtate that might be called a ſlow convaleſcence from melancholy madneſs, the huſband of that ſiſter, and her children, were aſſembled. Though this increaſe of my eſtabliſhment deſtroyed all my hopes of domeſtic tranquillity which I had fondly flattered myſelf I ſhould regain, if my wife could reſolve to live for me and her children, and

once more taſte the ſimple deights of nature, I ſubmitted without a murmur to poſtpone a plan of life ſtill dear to my imagination, believing it was only poſtponed; and that when the affairs of her brother-in-law were ſettled, which my purſe and my time were inceſſantly occupied to complete—his family being re-eſtabliſhed in *their* home, my friendſhip towards them would ſo operate on my wife, that I ſhould have nothing to wiſh in my own.

" There was a great number of gentlemen's families in the neighbourhood, particularly of Weſt Indians, who of courſe thought ſuch an acceſſion to their ſociety ſhould be aſſiduouſly cultivated; but my wife, who now appeared to have no pleaſure but mine, left it wholly to me either to encourage or decline their advances. I candidly told them, my purpoſe was to live very much retired, but yet not wholly to avoid an intercourſe of occaſional civility. Mrs. Hal-

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wyn was the only one of the family who, when theſe parties aſſembled at my houſe, never appeared. Mortified pride is oftener than is generally believed the ſource of mental derangement; and as no human being had ever been more oſtentatiouſly elevated with her ſituation during the ſhort courſe of her proſperity, ſo none had ever felt more poignantly the reverſe in fortune. Her vain and weak mind could not bear the ſuperiority of that man who had reſcued her and her family from deſtruction; and I believe, in the morbid malignity of her ſpirit, ſhe hated me more for my kindneſs than ſhe would have done had I left them all to their deſtiny. Confined, however, to her own apartments, I ſeldom ſaw her; her huſband too was now very frequently abſent on his affairs, of which I received from time to time the moſt flattering accounts; and as to the old lady my mother-in-law, ſhe had in a great degree regained her ſpirits. She was once more

conſidered as a perſon of conſequence; her advice was aſked, her opinions attended to, and ſhe not unfrequently enjoyed the delights of a rubber or a pool with ſome other dowagers of the neighbourhood, and the rector of the pariſh. My whole houſehold therefore were apparently content through the winter months, which I had feared would prove rather a ſevere trial to thoſe who had ſo lately lived among the moſt diſſipated ſcenes of the metropolis. My wife, if not gay, was tranquil, and the gratitude ſhe ſeemed to feel for what I had done for her family, had I hoped and believed awakened all her former affection. A calamity, however, of another deſcription than thoſe I had hitherto ſuffered under overtook me. My lovely little girl, now in her ſeventh year, became ill of a fever. She recovered from the acute diſeaſe, but fell into a decline. I hurried with her and her mother to the Weſt of England;

and

and from thence to thoſe parts of Wales, celebrated for the reſtoration of conſumptive patients; but my anxiety, my endeavours, my ſleepleſs nights and days of ſtifled agony—all were vain. My little angel expired in my arms; and deteſting my exiſtenee after a misfortune which I believed it impoſſible to ſurvive, I felt as if whoever did not lament her as I did injured me. Her mother was affected, but I thought not affected enough by an incident which deſtroyed the moſt flattering object of thoſe viſions of future delight which I had ſtill indulged. Mrs. Maynard did certainly, however, appear deeply dejected; and when we returned together to my Dorſetſhire houſe, her mother, who had remained there, pretended to dread the conſequences of her ſorrow, reproached me for encouraging it; and heſitated not to ſay, that, inſtead of ſuffering her to dwell on this uſeleſs regret, and deſtroy herſelf for the loſs of *ſuch a child* (that I

remembered was her expreſſion), I ought to promote her going into company, and uſe every means that my fortune put in my power to recover the ſpirits and preſerve the beauty of my wife; a ſubject on which the old lady always dwelt with particular complacency. I affected not to underſtand, though I could not be ignorant what this meant. It was to pave the way for a propoſal of going to Bath, for which the autumnal ſeaſon was now approaching. I determined to be miſerable at home; and the good lady, who could not yet diſpenſe with, though ſhe could forget my ſervices, was obliged to ſubmit.

"Juſt at this point of time Mr. Halwyn returned in great ſpirits from a long reſidence in London and other places where his buſineſs lay. He had recovered, he told us, very capital ſums of money, which he had conſidered as deſperate. His aſſignees were convinced

vinced that, by their giving him a little more time, he ſhould not only be able to pay to all his creditors the utmoſt of their demands, but be reſtored to an high degree of affluence. I was glad of his good fortune, but my heart ſtill ſuffering the pain of paternal regret, was incapable of any pleaſure, and I liſtened (though attentively) coldly to the minute account he ſeemed fond of giving me of the various means by which his affairs were to be retrieved. His other auditors were leſs torpid, and the elderly lady in particular was never weary of hearing the praiſes of his brother—a young man whom he had taken into a ſhare of his buſineſs in the height of his proſperous fortune, and who, on the firſt apprehenſion of its decline, had gone to America, to Liſbon, Barcelona, and afterwards to France, in hopes of ſaving the houſe by collecting many of its debts before its diſtreſſes were known. The activity and ſpirit, the knowledge

and perſeverance of this young adventurer were the theme of Mr. Halwyn's panegyric; yet from time to time he artfully introduced his obligations to me, without whoſe generous aſſiſtance, he ſaid, all his brother's exertions and his own would have been fruitleſs. This young man was ſoon to go again to the Continent, to put the finiſhing hand to arrangements ſo fortunately begun. I found it was expected of me to invite him down on a viſit to his brother, by whoſe account any one would have imagined that he equalled at leaſt 'the admirable Crichton.' I was ill diſpoſed for any additional ſociety; but, unwilling to appear unaccommodating and moroſe, and not to do every thing where I had done ſo much, the invitation was given, and my accompliſhed viſitor arrived.

"His perſon was undoubtedly a very fine one; his manners ſuch as evinced how much an active mind may acquire by

by viſiting different countries. The elder brother, with great affectation of knowledge and taſte, was, it was eaſy to ſee, a mere mercantile ſpeculator; but Mr. Frederic Halwyn had ſo much of the man of faſhion, that it was hard to conceive he had been brought up amid the dull routine of a compting-houſe. He ſeemed to be deeply impreſſed with a ſenſe of the obligations his brother owed to me; while to the ladies of the family, his politeneſs, the eaſy gaiety of his converſation, could not fail to recommend him. He was occaſionally with us for about ſix weeks. At the end of that time I conſented to accompany him and his brother to London for the purpoſe of farther ſettling the affairs of the latter, who was now able to repay ſome part of the advance I had made for him; and, that I might complete the good work I had begun, I met the parties who expected my receipt for this money, (about four thouſand pounds,) prepared with a

deed by which I preſented this ſum to the wife and children of my creditor, on condition of its being ſettled to them; and I gave him at the ſame time a full diſcharge for the reſt. I will not repeat the acknowledgements made by Mr. Halwyn, nor the praiſes I received from the perſons intereſted who were preſent. It was not to obtain thoſe eulogiums I had acted. I obſerved ſomething ſingular, however, in the manner of Frederic Halwyn; who, contrary to his uſual manner, was confuſed and diſconcerted, and haſtened from the place of meeting before the buſineſs was entirely finiſhed, on pretence of an engagement with a military friend, who was on the point of embarking for India. I had ſome affairs relative to my Jamaica property to ſettle, which kept me three days in town. I then ſet out for Dorſetſhire, and was ſenſible of the only ſatisfaction I had felt ſince I loſt my daughter, when I anticipated the pleaſure my wife would

feel in hearing what I had done for her ſiſter and her ſiſter's children. I had made the journey on horſeback, attended by one ſervant. It was late in the evening when I approached my houſe, which was ſituated on high ground, and I looked for the lights, which, as it was now the month of July, were almoſt always to be ſeen from the bow window of a muſic room, where my Fanny uſually paſſed the evenings; but no light appeared either there or from any other part of the houſe. As my return was expected, though I had not named the exact day, I was rather ſurpriſed that my wife ſhould be out, which, however, I concluded, was the caſe, and I knew it was not always eaſy for her to reſiſt the importunity of her mother when ſhe was bent on a rubber. It was no ſmall part of the ſatisfaction in which I indulged myſelf, to think, that in conſequence of the arrangements to which I had ſo largely contributed, I ſhould become

become master of my own house, which I never felt myself to be while this lady made it her residence. I was now at the gate which opened into the court-yard of my house. A man was standing there who I soon saw was an old coachman, who had lived with me ever since I married. I spoke eagerly to him: "Well, Hugh, how is your mistress? how is every body at home?" The man opened the gate in silence. I repeated my question: "Is your lady well?—is she at home?"—"My lady—Sir—" said he, "is—I—thought, Sir—My lady—" I was struck with astonishment and terror, and throwing myself off my horse, I demanded impatiently what was the matter, and where was my wife? "My mistress, Sir, is gone from home, has been gone these two days."—"Gone!" exclaimed I; "how gone? what is it you mean?"

"My dear master," said the poor fellow, "I waited here to see you before

you went into the houſe. My lady has left it, not meaning, I fear, to return." —" Not return?—And her mother—is ſhe with her?"—" The old lady went yeſterday, Sir, ſaying ſhe could not bear to ſee your honour after what had happened."

" I found myſelf become giddy, and leaning on my ſervant, endeavoured to recover recollection and fortitude: but the one deſtroyed the other. " My ſon!" cried I, " my boy! where is he?" —" Within, Sir, with his tutor," was the anſwer. " And my wife is gone, you ſay, not to return! I do not underſtand what it means!—Gone! for what purpoſe?—with whom gone?"

" Ah, Sir!" ſaid the honeſt man, " it is not for ſervants to give their opinion on ſuch matters. It is not for us to ſee more than our betters like we ſhould; but indeed there is hardly one of us who did not gueſs at the ſame perſon as being he who has enticed my lady. It is no

ſudden

ſudden thing I fear, though to be ſure nobody dared to think of ſuch a notion."

"What is it you mean, Hugh? Tell me plainly and at once."

"Why, then, Sir, it is that Mr. Frederic Halwyn my lady has gone off with. Come, dear Sir, let me lead you into the houſe. God forgive us, that any body alive could be ſo ungrateful! Sir—Sir—recover yourſelf—Let me call the tutor, and my young maſter. The ſight of him will be a comfort to you."

"Stir not on your life," cried I, "to call any one. Go round, and open the door of the library, next the garden. Bring me candles thither, and let me not ſee any other ſervant. As for my poor boy!——"

"My voice failed me; and the worthy-hearted fellow, trembling, entreated me to let him ſtay to help me into the houſe; but I fiercely bade him obey me; and haſtened, with hurried ſteps, and in a ſtate

a ſtate of mind I cannot now think of without terror, to my library, where I threw myſelf into a chair breathleſs and almoſt ſenſeleſs. Hugh followed me with a candle, and two letters which he put on the table in ſilence. I thought I heard the voice of my ſon. I ſtarted up, bade the man leave me, and locked the door.

" Who can deſcribe chaos, or analyſe the mingled emotions of a ſoul agonized like mine? My mind ſeemed to have been at once brutalized. It was not blood, but vitriol and fire that I thought circulated in my veins. I could at that moment have committed any act of deſperation, on myſelf, on my innocent child, or even the firſt being that came in my way; but no weapon was at hand, for Hugh, in his honeſt zeal, had thrown my ſword (which hung near the chimney) out of the window before I entered the room; and the piſtols over the fire-place were not charged. I know not whether,

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if I had been in my dreſſing-room, the razor or the knife with which I cut my nails, would not have ſerved for the inſtruments of vengeance againſt myſelf.

"I groaned aloud; I ſhrieked; I threw myſelf on the floor, and beat my head againſt it, till the blood guſhed from my noſe, and, half ſtunned, I lay breathleſs, and with diminiſhed ſenſation. There was a noiſe without: it was like perſons whiſpering. I aroſe, with a confuſed idea that I ought to ſacrifice the firſt perſon who dared to intrude upon me. A voice which I knew to be that of Mr. Warley, my boy's tutor, then entreated me to open the door. All this while I had graſped in my convulſed hands the two letters; one of which I knew was from my wife, and one from her mother. 'Sir,' ſaid the voice which now addreſſed me, 'let me beg of you to open the door. It is your ſon, who, by me, implores you.'—'My ſon!" cried I, "my ſon!—I have no ſon!

ſon!—Leave me all of you, or what I ſhall do may be dreadful. Mr. Warley, take care of your own ſafety." The whiſpering was then renewed for a moment, while I placed myſelf near the door, determined to revenge the intruſion on the firſt perſon who dared to enter. But the lock was ſuddenly forced; and my ſteward, aſſiſted by Mr. Warley and all my men ſervants, made me almoſt inſtantly their priſoner. What followed was all raving and phrenſy. I was, in truth, in a condition of mind that made the coercion now uſed abſolutely neceſſary, to prevent my doing ſome injury to others or myſelf. A medical friend, for whom I had a great eſteem, directed theſe proceedings, and his was the firſt voice to which I could be prevailed upon to liſten. Yet his arguments I ſhould have rejected with abhorrence and contempt, had they been like thoſe which are generally uſed by the conſolers of the unhappy. He preached none of that cold-

blooded

blooded optimiſm, to which the hypocrites who recommend it to others know their own hearts refuſe to accede. On the contrary, he allowed that my misfortune was the greateſt and moſt inſupportable that a manly ſpirit could be called upon to endure. Yet he bade me look at the calamities under which every one groaned more or leſs; not to conſole myſelf by comparing my caſe with that of others, but that I might learn to ſubmit to the common lot of humanity, in which evil does moſt undoubtedly predominate, from the cradle to the grave. 'Half the miſeries we endure,' ſaid he, 'we owe to our wild ſchemes of happineſs, our romantic ideas of perfection. You married the woman whoſe fidelity and ingratitude now deprive you of your reaſon, at a time of life when, if you had thought any other qualification but thoſe of perſon neceſſary, you were no judge whether they exiſted or no. Eminent beauty in yet early

early youth; with mild manners and apparent good nature, at a time when ſhe was the idol of a mother who never contradicted her; a few trifling acquirements which neither improved her heart nor her underſtanding; all this you ſaw ſhe poſſeſſed: and certainly few men of your age would have thought of inquiring for more. I believe, my friend, it is a melancholy truth, that women have no character at all; and what is called their education gives none: it only helps to obliterate any diſtinguiſhing traits of original diſpoſition which here and there may riſe by chance into higher ſtyles of character. We ſet out with ſaying that women *muſt do* ſo and ſo, and *think* ſo and ſo, as their grandmother and mothers thought before them. If any of them venture even to look as if they had any will of their own, or ſuppoſed themſelves capable of reaſoning, how immediately are they marked as ſomething monſtrous, abſurd, and out of the

the courſe of nature! while the moſt inſipid moppet that ever looked in a glaſs is preferred to one of thoſe reaſoning damſels, eſpecially by empty and ſuperficial young men; who, ſuch as the majority of them are, two-thirds of the younger women, deſire only to pleaſe. What then are we to expect from women, who, flattered into angels in their youth, forget that age will come; and ſickneſs, perhaps, even ſooner than time blaſt the perfections on which all their vanity is founded? With this incenſe, my friend, your unhappy wife had been fed, till it became impoſſible for her to live without it. Your tenderneſs and affection were not enough for her, when you ceaſed to tell her ſhe was more than human. As long as ſhe was ſuffered, as during your gay life in London, to hear it from five hundred fools every year, ſhe was in ſome degree content; but, reduced by a reſidence in the country to dwindle into a mere mortal woman,

man, a mother and a wife, ſhe hungered and thirſted for the delectable and high-ſeaſoned admiration, by which alone ſhe had contrived to keep herſelf in good humour with herſelf; and the firſt man ſhe ſaw whoſe taſte and elegance qualified him in her opinion to gratify her vanity, eaſily taught her to forget her honour, her huſband, and her children. And will *you*, my friend, give up your reaſon; and abandon your child and your friends for *ſuch* a woman? Shake off this unmanly, this degrading weakneſs. Shew her that you can live without her; and do not, I beſeech you, forget your duties, becauſe ſhe never underſtood hers. As to the wretch who has repaid your unexampled friendſhip with the blackeſt ingratitude, I am convinced he will give you no opportunity perſonally puniſhing him. The lady, you ſee, ſays, in her letter, that as neither of them can ever behold you more, they have taken ſuch means of concealment

ment as will make it impoſſible for you ever to meet them. Tear her then from your heart for ever. The ſtruggle will be dreadful, but ſurely infinitely preferable to the long lingering miſery of contending with inſulted affection; of being conſidered as the poor-ſpirited dupe of ſuch a woman.' I liſtened to the arguments of my friend with the attention his underſtanding as well as his regard for me deſerved. I learned to bluſh for the weakneſs I had ſhewn, and reſumed, at leaſt apparently, a degree of tranquillity; but my heart was irrecoverably wounded. My temper was changed; I had no longer pleaſure in any of my former purſuits. I ſhunned ſociety, and ſhut myſelf for whole weeks, and even months, among my books. Even the education of my poor boy, which I uſed to ſuperintend myſelf, and which had once been my firſt gratification, I now had no courage to attend to. 'For what,' ſaid I, 'am I teaching him the elegancies

elegancies of literature and the refinements of art? To quicken his ſenſibility, to inflame his paſſions, to ſet high his taſte for perfection, all perhaps to prepare for him the ſad certainty of ſuffering ſuch as mine; all, that he may be more completely and ſyſtematically wretched. Sometimes, though I doted on my ſon, I was unable to ſtay with him, and wandered about from place to place where I was not known, or hid myſelf among the crowds of London, as the place where I might with the leaſt interruption indulge the anguiſh which time itſelf ſeemed incapable of healing. Meanwhile, however, I took the means my lawyers preſcribed to me, to obtain a divorce. The firſt ſteps towards it were attended with conſiderable difficulties, for the unhappy woman and her paramour were abroad; where, after eighteen or twenty months, he had left her, promiſing however to return, and had gone to America, on one of thoſe

commercial ſpeculations in which he was ſtill engaged. Mrs. Frederic Halwyn, for ſhe had taken the name of her ſeducer, had then, (as thoſe my lawyers employed to inquire, informed us) ſtruggled for ſome time with the inconveniences of narrow circumſtances, and a doubtful character in a foreign country, ſtill expecting the return of her lover, till neceſſity compelled her to throw herſelf on the compaſſion of her mother, who very reluctantly received her, though to the folly of that weak and worthleſs woman the errors of her daughter may juſtly be imputed. The lawyers now proceeded to obtain a divorce for me, which, as it met with no oppoſition, was decided about two years and a half after our firſt ſeparation; and as I had taken Fanny without any fortune, ſhe was reduced to a very deſtitute ſtate, and became wholly dependent on her mother and her ſiſter. This I never intended; and as ſoon as the neceſſary forms could be gone through

through, I preſented to Miſs Frances Berrington, for ſhe was now to bear her maiden name, a thouſand pounds for her immediate occaſions, and a ſettlement of four hundred a year during her life. She wrote to thank me; but I would not open her letter: ſhe implored me to ſee her only for five minutes, in preſence of any perſons I would name; but worlds would not have bribed me at that time to have heard the ſound of her ſyren voice, or to have looked once at that countenance ſo long the book of fate to me; and fearful leſt ſhe ſhould attempt to procure an interview by ſtratagem, I ſet out with my ſon and his tutor on a journey to Scotland, not with any hope of forgetting my wretchedneſs, yet determined for his ſake, who was now in his eleventh year, to endure it more like a man than I had hitherto done.

"On him, for he was all I had left in the world, my attention became more

and more fixed. I ſtudied inceſſantly how to ſecure for his future life that happineſs which was for ever to be denied to my own. His perſon had even more beauty than is to be wiſhed for in a boy: he was the exact image of his mother, and his temper was likely I feared to reſemble hers. He had the ſame indeciſion, the ſame facility of being governed by any one who ſhould acquire an aſcendancy over him, and, I feared, would have all her faults of perſonal vanity; and with ſuch a fortune as he would poſſeſs, I dreaded the conſequences of this diſpoſition. After a long debate I could not determine to ſend him to a public ſchool; yet I began to ſee that the wandering and unſettled life I led, was, notwithſtanding his tutor was a very attentive and proper perſon, inimical to that perſevering application to which I knew ſuch a diſpoſition ought to be habituated. Juſt as theſe difficulties preſſed the moſt forcibly

cibly on my mind, I was at Buxton; where, on my way from the north, I ſtopped to paſs a fortnight. There I became acquainted with a family of the name of Hamilton. It conſiſted of a father and three daughters, of which the eldeſt was about ſeven-and-twenty, the next younger by many years, and the third yet a child. Mr. Hamilton, who was one of the many branches of the noble family of that name, was a ſcholar, and had ſeen a great deal of the world, having reſided many years abroad in a public capacity. His converſation was particularly agreeable to me; for, though he had acquired rather too much of the formality that is attached to the diplomatic character, his knowledge was extenſive, and his mind well cultivated, while I could not but admire the manner in which he lived with his family, and their affection for him. The eldeſt, who was an accompliſhed woman, poſſeſſed all his confidence, and he often

told me, that her judgment was always his guide in caſes where he doubted his own. Her underſtanding did indeed appear to be of a ſuperior rank, and her management of her father's family, as well as her attention to the education of her younger ſiſters, though it was done without parade, ſeemed ſo much what it ought to be, that no one who obſerved it could fail to be prejudiced in her favour. Her perſon was not ſtrikingly handſome; but it was far from being diſagreeable. Her face was rather agreeable than beautiful; but her large dark eyes gave it a character of intelligence, which accorded with the underſtanding ſhe ſeemed to poſſeſs. Ever to love again as I *had* loved was impoſſible; but I inſenſibly found reaſons for prolonging my ſtay at Buxton, and began to conſider Miſs Hamilton as one who might again attach me to a home, and be the beſt coadjutor I could find in the education of my ſon. I ſtudied her

carefully,

carefully, and, I thought, with impartial eyes. All to whom I ſpoke of her were unanimous in her praiſe, and the fondneſs ſhe expreſſed for my boy would have made a leſs elegant woman agreeable in my eyes. My ſtory, and the deep anguiſh which ſtill preyed on my heart when I thought (and I could not ceaſe to think) of his mother, were well known to Mr. Hamilton, and I knew his daughter had heard it from him. But ſhe ſeemed to feel for me a degree of pity which ſoothed my imagination. I liked her more and more; and at length, after an acquaintance of about two months, I offered myſelf, and was accepted. Two months more intervened before the ſettlements and other neceſſary preparations were ready, and during all that time I found, in the apparent temper, manners, and conduct of Miſs Hamilton, every reaſon to be ſatisfied with the choice I had made. Since the fatal day when the cruel flight of my

unhappy Fanny had rendered my houſe in Dorſetſhire odious to me, I never had acquired the courage to make it my abode, and now it was not without a very painful effort that I determined to carry thither her ſucceſſor. But, conſcious of my own weakneſs, and to remove as much as was poſſible objects that might nouriſh it, I had many alterations made in the houſe, and entirely new furniſhed it, as if in compliment to its future miſtreſs. Thither it was her wiſh to go in the ſpring which ſucceeded our marriage; and I re-viſited with another than Fanny a place where her image more than at any other reſidence was perpetually preſent to me, while the very great and increaſing reſemblance her ſon bore to her, gave me, in deſpite of reaſon, ſenſations of ſuch mingled pleaſure and anguiſh as I ſhould vainly attempt to deſcribe.

"I had, however, a great eſteem and even affection for my now wife. She acquitted

acquitted herſelf of every duty ſhe had undertaken, with an exactitude which left me nothing in reaſon to wiſh. Yet I was, after eighteen or twenty months had elapſed, inſenſibly fatigued by a ſort of minute attention to economy, which I thought often took up time that might have been much more rationally and indeed uſefully employed. Inſtead of cultivating talents for literature and converſation, which I had fancied were of the firſt rate, ſhe ſat whole mornings with a pen in her hand reckoning the pence and even halfpence that had been expended during the week; and in the houſehold affairs, as well as in all that related to her perſonal expences and thoſe of my ſon, there was a ſuperfluous and teaſing attention to trifles, that I ſometimes found exceſſively tireſome—and I knew it was wholly unneceſſary. Immediately on her arrival at the Dorſetſhire Houſe all the old ſervants had been diſcharged, without even excepting

my faithful Hugh, who (he being now an old man,) I penſioned as well as one or two others, and they ſtill lived in the villages near us, of which they were natives. My wife ſoon took occaſion to forbid their ever coming to the houſe; and when I ventured gently to remonſtrate, ſhe told me, that after the diſorders that had occurred in my family while theſe people lived with me, ſhe was aſtoniſhed how I could wiſh to encourage them about me; but, as ſhe ſhould conduct my houſe in a very different manner ſhe hoped, in *every reſpect*, from that in which it was then managed, I muſt permit her to inſiſt on keeping all ſuch perſons at a diſtance. Yet it was from theſe people that, by means of her favourite maid, ſhe contrived to gather anecdotes of the paſt, which ſhe treaſured up in her mind; and ſometimes when her good humour, which I ſoon found was not invincible, forſook her, ſhe brought them forward in the way of

contraſting her conduct with that of her predeceſſor, with a degree of malignity which affected me more than I wiſhed to let appear; for I hoped that domeſtic tranquillity might yet be mine, though I felt myſelf every day more and more hopeleſs of happineſs.

"The attention of my wife to my beloved boy had never, after her marriage, been what I had flattered myſelf it would be. I knew how much a woman of ſenſe and ſpirit can contribute to forming the mind and manners of a young man; but if I hinted at my wiſhes that ſhe would admit him to be with her whenever his tutor or his exerciſe left him unoccupied, ſhe reſented it by intimating that I had married her only to make her a governeſs, and that no company was ſo irkſome as that of a great rude boy, who ought to be at ſchool. My poor Francis, however, was not rude; his temper was too mild, too facile, and his turn rather for books and

drawing than for the volatility and noiſy thoughtleſſneſs of his age. But Mrs. George Denbigh was greatly changed in her opinion of him ſince her marriage; and this eſtrangement became more viſible, when, in the third year of our marriage, ſhe bore a daughter. From that period ſhe ſeemed to conſider my ſon as an uſurper, who would have too great a ſhare of the fortune ſhe wiſhed wholly to monopolize for this and other children ſhe ſuppoſed it likely ſhe ſhould have; and, artful as ſhe was, ſhe found it impoſſible to diſguiſe her real ſentiments. My home, whether in London or the country, now became every hour more and more uneaſy to me. My ſon, who was the object deareſt to my heart, would ſoon I foreſaw be driven, with his tutor, who was an excellent man, to ſome leſs unpleaſant reſidence: yet I could not bear to part with him; and partly by authority and partly by making it her own intereſt, I prevented for another twelve-

twelvemonth the increaſe towards m ſon of conduct that was become intolerable to me. Frank was then fifteen, very tall of his age; yet the beauty of his face, and the ſlenderneſs of his form, prevented him from aſſuming a manly appearance; but his ſpirit was high, candid, and generous, and his attachment to me, his tender ſolicitude to prevent my every wiſh, and his total exemption from all vice, made him ſo inexpreſſibly dear to me, that, though he was qualified for the Univerſity, and it had been my intention to ſend him thither, I could not but with extreme reluctance; and though Mr. Warley was to accompany him, determine for the firſt time to ſeparate myſelf from him.

"It was this increaſing attachment to merit which malice itſelf could not deny, and the expence which Mrs. George Denbigh foreſaw would attend ſending him to Oxford, that embittered her ſpirit againſt us both. I concealed it from

Frank

Frank as much as I could, and for that purpoſe went out more than I had ever been accuſtomed to do, and took him with me. This, however, only made matters worſe on my return, and I was reproached with having not even natural affection for my daughter, now above two years old. The mildeſt and moſt forbearing temper cannot endure beyond a certain point; and it moſt unfortunately happened, that at this period I returned with Frank and his tutor from an excurſion of a fortnight, and found my wife in a very ill humour. Her little girl had taken the meaſles in my abſence; and though her life was in no danger, a humour had fallen into her eyes, which her mother thought was likely for ever to disfigure her. I expreſſed, what I really felt, ſincere concern at this circumſtance; when, inſtead of ſuch an anſwer as might have been expected, my wife bade me not affect what ſhe knew I did not feel. '*My child,*' ſaid

ſaid ſhe ſharply, 'never poſſeſſed your affections; it is *beauty* only that engages your heart, although it has brought upon you nothing but ſhame and diſgrace!' My ſon, aſtoniſhed at the manner in which this was ſpoken, and ſeeing how greatly I was ſhocked, mildly entreated her to explain herſelf; when ſhe had the unfeminine inhumanity to tell him to ſeek it in the diſgraceful hiſtory of his mother, now a common proſtitute in the ſtreets of London!

"From my poor boy the real circumſtances that related to his mother had been carefully concealed. He imagined that ſhe had left me inconſequence of ſome ſlight diſagreement relative to the affair of her ſiſter's huſband, and that, having been ſeized with a fever in London, ſhe had there died before our reconciliation, which had occaſioned the deep melancholy I had in the ſucceeding years fallen into. This ſtory, impreſſed for ſix years on his mind, was never doubted, when the veil

was

was thus rudely torn off that had ſo carefully concealed from him the diſgraceful reality, more diſgraceful indeed than I was myſelf aware of: for I had now for many years abſtained from inquiring after that unhappy woman, whoſe annuity my ſteward regularly paid every quarter.

" Francis, with an expreſſion I ſhall never forget, turned towards me. His ſpeaking eyes demanded an inſtant explanation. I feared he would have fallen at my feet; and claſping him in my arms, I bade him bear like a man an inſult which ſhould never be repeated; then, unable wholly to refrain from expreſſing the indignation I felt, I ſpoke to Mrs. Denbigh with more paſſionate ſeverity than ever I had uſed towards her before; and haſtened with my ſon from a ſcene of provocation to which I determined at that moment never again to expoſe him, whatever my now hateful bonds might bind me to endure. I imme-

immediately ordered my poſt-chaiſe, and with my ſon, his tutor, and our own ſervants, ſet out for London; giving my boy no time to hear the truth which at that moment I had not reſolution to tell him. At the firſt poſt town, however, another chaiſe was ordered for Mr. Warley; and then, my poor Francis and I travelled together, and I related to him the cruel miſconduct of his mother; and ſaw, though I palliated rather than exaggerated every circumſtance, that while he heard me in profound ſilence, every word I uttered ſunk with fatal force into his heart.

"'And does ſhe ſtill live, Sir?' ſaid he in a tremulous voice, 'Does my mother—(Oh, God! how ſhall I aſk it?)—does my mother ſtill live, and live in infamy—in proſtitution?'

"What a queſtion from a ſon to a father!—from ſuch a ſon to a father feeling as I felt! I endeavoured to reaſſure him, however; I told him, I hoped

hoped and believed that aſſertion originated only in the malice of Mrs. Denbigh; for that I truſted, as his unhappy mother had a ſufficient income, neceſſity could not, ſo mere conſtitutional vice would not, induce her to deſcend to this laſt wretched degradation; and that her annuity continued to be paid to the ſame perſon who had, from the firſt year of my divorcing her, always received it.

"Francis forbore to aſk any farther queſtions, and our journey was made in melancholy ſilence. I tried, but unſucceſsfully, to ſpeak on any other topic: the mind of my poor boy ſeemed wholly abſorbed by reflections on what he had heard; and when we arrived at the houſe I inhabited in town, I beheld him with undeſcribable anguiſh. His countenance had loſt its bloom, his eyes were heavy and ſunk; he ſeemed half unconſcious whatever I ſaid to him; he ate nothing; and, as his chamber was adjoining to mine, I heard but too plainly, though

though I forbore to notice it, that he did not ſleep during the whole of the ſucceeding night. I aroſe, however, before him; and concealing none of my fears or their ſources from Mr. Warley, I conſulted with him on what it was beſt to do; for, from my knowledge of the temper and diſpoſition of my ſon, I foreſaw the moſt fatal conſequences from the wound his ſenſibility had thus received. Warley imagined, with probability enough, that the impreſſion however deep would eaſily be eraſed from a young mind, to which almoſt every object beyond the paternal roof was new. He adviſed me to throw him as much as I could into ſcenes of innocent gaiety and diſſipation for a few weeks, but never without either one or other of us, his father or his tutor, accompanying him. I had many acquaintance in town, (for a man of fortune can always command acquaintance,) at whoſe houſes he would ſee variety of characters. The public

public amuſements he had ſeldom viſited; and I concluded with Mr. Warley, that we ſhould conquer in a ſhort time the depreſſion he now ſuffered under; and afterwards, as the Eaſter term would begin, he was to go to Chriſtchurch, of which college I had entered him a gentleman commoner ſome months before.

"In purſuance of this plan, I affected an eaſe of mind which I was very far from feeling. I endeavoured to appear to Frank as if having been long accuſtomed to our mutual misfortune; I had taught myſelf to conſider it, without ſuffering more than I ſhould have done had I known his mother had been dead; yet heaven is my witneſs with how much more anguiſh I always thought of her, unworthy as ſhe had proved herſelf, than if I had known ſhe no longer inhabited this world! But I dared not, while I perſevered in this plan, flatter myſelf it was ſucceſsful. My ſon went

where

wherever I told him amuſement was to be found, and whither I ſeemed to wiſh he ſhould go; but nothing appeared to amuſe him, or to have any power to detach him from the ſad ſubject which occupied his thoughts, corroded his heart, and I thought was viſibly undermining his health.

" After we had been about three weeks in London, during which time Mrs. Denbigh never deigned to make in writing any apology for the conduct that had driven me from the country, it happened that I dined with a party of gentlemen, where, as I knew the converſation would turn wholly on politics and on party diſputes, which at that period ran very high, I thought my ſon would find rather fatigue than amuſement; it was ſettled therefore that he ſhould dine at home with his tutor, and afterwards go to a new play in which a celebrated actreſs performed her part ſo admirably, that during the three or four nights

nights it had been performed, the houſe had been greatly crowded. I promiſed to meet them there; but it was late before we aroſe from table, and ſtill later before my friends would ſuffer me to go. At length I reached the theatre; but the play was over, and even half the entertainment paſſed. I went into an upper box, and ſurveyed the houſe; but I could not perceive thoſe of whom I was in ſearch. I croſſed to the other ſide, but ſtill could not perceive them; and I concluded, as it had often happened before, that my young man, ſatisfied with the play, had returned home before the afterpiece began. It was now cloſed, and I was making my way out with the crowd, when every body was ſtopped in the lobby by a number of perſons aſſembled round two men who were quarrelling, and, as it was underſtood, inſiſting on fighting about ſome women of the town. The tumult became ſo great that the ſentinels were called, and I ſaw

ſticks

ſticks and bayonets brandiſhed about, and heard the oaths of the men and the ſhrieks of the women, with a degree of diſguſt that urged me to haſten from this ſcene of vice and noiſe; when preſſing near the diſputing parties to reach the door, I heard—Oh, memory! thou wert but too faithful!—I was ſtruck by the tone of a voice which, though ſeven years had paſſed ſince I laſt heard it, ſtill made my heart vibrate. I ſtepped forward, and I ſaw a face—faded indeed! and changed. The features were disfigured by bad habits, and the complexion polluted by art; but it was the face on which I had gazed ſo often with rapture. Alas! I ſaw before me in one of the objects of ruffianly contention my once-loved lamented Fanny. She was appealing to ſtrangers for protection againſt the inſults that ſome of the men had offered her, and which others were now trying to reſent; but the people ſhe was ſpeaking to treated her with ſcorn and deriſion, and at that moment,

moment, for it was all momentary, a blow was levelled at her from one of the contending parties. I ſaw it about to fall on her; and receiving it on my ſhoulder, I involuntarily claſped my arms round her; and either from my appearance, or rather becauſe a humane action, for whoſoever exerted meets with applauſe from any aſſembly of Engliſh people, the ſpectators gave me way, and I bore her to a ſeat. She knew me, and fell ſenſeleſs into my arms.

"The crowd was ſoon diſperſed; the perſons who had been fighting were carried away in cuſtody. Few others felt any curioſity about the poor abandoned creature that had been one of the cauſes of quarrel; and the other women who had been parties in it were glad to eſcape: ſo that I ſoon found myſelf almoſt alone with this fatal object, the cauſe of all the calamities of my life; and, merciful Heaven! in what a ſituation did I ſee her!

"The faded reality, the diminiſhed and injured

injured beauty of that form and face, which were so clearly represented by my heart to my imagination, was in my arms. I could have pressed it to my bosom;—but then came the idea of that perfidy, ingratitude, and degradation which had stained this lovely image, once so perfect; the recollection of the long years of misery succeeding those when my tenderness, my affection, should have secured all her gratitude and my happiness. No: it is impossible, by any form of words I can find, to describe what at that moment passed in my mind. I could now have rejoiced in the illusion that time only had dimmed the lustre of that eminent beauty; and by a sudden revulsion of my thoughts, I next meditated how to shake from me the worthless destroyer of my peace, merely performing towards her the duties of humanity as an unfortunate woman.

"Thought is rapid under the domination of violent passions; and though

hardly two minutes had paſſed, and Fanny ſtill lay ſenſeleſs in my arms, I had run over in idea all my preceding life, and brought my mind to the conſideration of what I and what ſhe now was. Some of the women who ſell books and ſlight refreſhments about the avenues of the theatre now came up, to propoſe ſervices which I had not recollection enough to aſk. I offered them money to procure help; I ſtammered out ſome unconnected ſentences; but I was myſelf almoſt as much in want of aſſiſtance as the fragile and apparently half dead object I ſupported, when ſuddenly I ſaw before me my ſon! Imagine the ſtrange impropriety of the ſituation in which he beheld me; the impoſſibility of my accounting to him for it....'Sir,' cried my poor boy, aſtoniſhed at my confuſion, 'we have ſought you the whole evening.' He thought not at that moment of his mother; he only bluſhed to believe that his father had forgotten

forgotten in his own perſon that propriety of conduct he had ſo earneſtly enforced towards himſelf. Divided, torn, diſtracted by ſo many contending ſenſations, I felt my head grow giddy, and I was tempted to ruſh into the ſtreet, and like a maniac proclaim aloud the inſupportable anguiſh of my burſting heart.

"The pale countenance of Frank, (for mine, when he looked at it ſteadily, was not that of a man engaged in a tranſient intrigue) his trembling hand as he graſped mine, recalled in ſome degree my ſcattered ſenſes. But how could I ſo ſhock him as to tell him the truth?—How could I ſay, 'This woman whom you ſee, and who is evidently one that ſubſiſts on the caſual profits of proſtitution, is ſhe who bore you!' My heart recoiled. I bade him in almoſt an angry tone leave me. It was very unuſual, indeed, for Frank to hear from *me* a word that ſounded harſhly in his ears.

At that inſtant, however, Mr. Warley appeared. I beckoned to him. The women who had ſurrounded us had by this time interpoſed, and ſupported the ſad object of my ſolicitude. I left her to their care, while I ſeized Warley's arm; and briefly communicating to him the miſerable truth, I beſought him to carry my ſon from a ſcene I could with difficulty ſupport myſelf.

"Mr. Warley approached him, and after a ſhort converſation they retired together; but I ſaw, with dread and amazement, the look which my unhappy ſon caſt toward me, and then toward his mother. Never, no, never will the expreſſion of his countenance at that moment be eraſed from my memory. I was relieved, however, by ſeeing him depart with his tutor, though I was convinced that he was not, nay, I hardly wiſhed he ſhould be, deceived, as to the perſon with whom he left me.

"Conſideration for him—pity, and

even the weakneſs of a more tender ſentiment—all urged me not to abandon the creature whom, though I could not reſtore her to honour and to peace, though ſhe could never more be mine, I might at leaſt reſcue from the horrid deſtiny to which the career ſhe was now in would infallibly lead her. I traverſed the room where I was in with hurried ſteps, endeavouring to ſummon my powers of endurance, that I might not in ſuch a place expoſe either her or myſelf. In the mean time ſhe recovered her ſenſes, and all that had paſſed inſtantly occurred to her. She looked towards me, anxiouſly dreading to know whether the man who had once ſo adored her, and whom ſhe had ſo irreparably injured, would not, however, be withheld by a momentary impulſe of pity from thoſe reproaches which her too buſy conſcience told her ſhe ſo well deſerved. I drew near her; the beloved name of Fanny roſe involuntarily to my lips;

but I checked myſelf, and, addreſſing her as a ſtranger, deſired to know if I could be of any ſervice to her in conducting her ſafe home. She turned her lovely eyes to me with a look moſt expreſſive! and attempted, but could not anſwer me. Uncertain what to do, hardly knowing what I did, I haſtily paid the women who had aſſiſted to recover her, and ſupported her (for ſhe ſeemed hardly able to walk) down ſtairs, where my chariot was waiting. I placed her in it, and followed her, without recollecting how improper and even impoſſible it was for me to conduct her to my own houſe, and that I knew not, and even dreaded to inquire, her abode. On the repeated queſtion of my aſtoniſhed ſervants, whither I would go? I was compelled to aſk her, where ſhe lived? She gave me, in a voice hardly articulate, a direction to a ſtreet in the outſkirts of the town. Thither I ordered the carriage to be driven. We proceeded

ceeded in ſilence, broken only on her part by deep and convulſive ſighs. A dirty-looking ſervant girl opened the door; and I perceived, when we entered the houſe (for my mind was now more collected,) that ſhe was ſurpriſed at the appearance of her miſtreſs, and ſtill more at mine, whoſe manner reſembled but little that of the people with whom ſhe had been accuſtomed to ſee her aſſociate. Our dialogue, when we were alone and ſhe was a little reſtored, was ſhort and energetic. I could not liſten to the agonizing confeſſion ſhe would have made of her errors, her ingratitude, and repentance; or, liſtening for a moment, I was unable to anſwer. I thought, however, ſhe did not know that had I been weak enough to have forgiven her perfidy and cruelty, and to have reſtored her to the place ſhe once held, ſtill there was an inſuperable barrier between us; that another now poſſeſſed her place; and the child of ano-

ther was to ſhare with her ſon my fortune and affection: and this truth, little as ſhe had deſerved my conſideration, I had not reſolution to tell her. Strange, and even now moſt dreadful to look back upon, were the mingled ſenſations that then agonized my boſom! They were confuſed, they were terrible! Her immediate eaſe and comfort were, however, the predominant wiſh of my heart. I could not bear to ſee her in ſuch a ſituation; liable to want the decencies of life, expoſed to the licentious inſolence of every wandering drunkard who knew the houſe to be of ill fame. But to expreſs to her all I felt on this ſubject was, perhaps, to raiſe expectations I never meant to fulfil. With ſuch reſolution, therefore, as I could collect, I parted from her. I attempted to appear cold; and yet my heart ſmote me, and my voice faltered, as, bidding her, 'farewell!' I told her, that the recollection of what ſhe was when firſt our ill-fated acquaint-

ance

ance began, would make me ever ſolicitous for her welfare; and that the next day ſhe ſhould receive a letter from me which would explain my future views. I ran through the ſtreets from her lodgings to my own houſe, without being conſcious why I hurried along, or able to determine on what I ought to do when I got there. The idea of my ſon, from whom it would be impoſſible to conceal the truth; the conduct I ought afterwards to obſerve; all preſſed on my mind with anguiſh for the debaſed ſituation of the once-loved creature I had juſt left—and I felt as if the power of rationally conſidering any thing would never again return to me.

"Breathleſs and confuſed I reached my own houſe. I aſked haſtily for Frank, and was told he was not gone to bed; but feeling myſelf quite unfit to ſpeak to him that night, yet unable to reſt without determining on ſomething, I

went to my ſtudy, and there ſent for Mr. Warley.

"From him I learned that my unhappy boy had not the leaſt doubt who the perſon was whom he had ſeen with me; and, indeed, had other evidence been wanting, the ſtriking reſemblance between them could not have eſcaped him. The account Mr. Warley gave me of the effect this diſcovery had on Frank made me ſhudder. I dreaded more than ever to come to an explanation, of which, however, I ſaw the neceſſity, and I paſſed the night in conſidering what I ought to ſay to him, and how I ought to act towards his mother. By the morning I had taken my reſolution, and I ſent for him. Pale, dejected, unable to anſwer my anxious inquiries after his health, he, after a moment, threw himſelf into my arms, and burſt into tears. 'Oh, my father!' ſaid he, 'had I never been deceived as to the unhappy

unhappy perſon we ſaw laſt night, Mrs. Maynard's cruel reproaches would not ſo deeply have ſtung me, nor ſhould I ſuffer what I do now.' I felt at that moment a proof that even thoſe deceptions which are called pious frauds are wrong; yet I was ignorant myſelf the ſituation of the wretched mother, though I knew enough to wiſh her exiſtence might be concealed from her ſon. It was now, however, no time for me to repent of the paſt; it was neceſſary that I ſhould conſider only the future; and I ſummoned courage to enter on the ſubject, and to relate to Frank all that had happened, of the oſtenſible circumſtances of which I found he had a clear recollection, though he was hardly eight years old, and though ſo much pains had been taken to deceive him. He remembered the abrupt departure of his mother; he remembered my paſſionate agonies; and had thought it ſtrange, that after ſome time, when he was told his

mother was dead, I ſeemed leſs affected than I was when ſhe left me. He had at that early age an idea of death, but none of thoſe diſagreements which had been aſſigned as having cauſed, what he for ſome time believed would be, a temporary abſence.

"While I related to him the truth, he ſat with his arms thrown on a writing-table that was before him, and his face hid by his hands. He was ſilent. I could hear that he ſuppreſſed his ſighs, and ſtruggled with the painful ſenſations that agitated his boſom, eſpecially when I was obliged to touch on the circumſtances of premeditated ingratitude, which had ſo aggravated the faithleſs conduct of his mother. I pauſed—I had finiſhed this dreadful explanation, and my poor boy lifted up his head, and fixed his eyes on mine with an expreſſion ſo full of mingled emotion, that I ſhall never ceaſe to remember it. 'Sir!' ſaid he, his voice trembling ſo much as to be almoſt

almoſt inarticulate, 'your injuries have indeed been great;—but—ſhe who has injured you is—ſtill *my* mother!—Will you abandon her to a courſe of life ſuch as ſhe is now in?'....." I will not be again ſo minute in relating our converſations. You now underſtand enough of our diſpoſitions to imagine what they muſt have been! Before I could execute the engagements, now made to my ſon, it was neceſſary to know, if ſhe to whom they related, and who had I found taken the name of Saville, would on her part enter into my views; and, while I ſhould conſider her as a ſiſter, relinquiſh for ever a way of life ſo diſgraceful to thoſe connected with her by more than human ties, and which no human laws could diſſolve. I had, it is true, ſeen appearances of remorſe and repentance, but they might be only the conſequences of ſudden ſurpriſe and ſhame.

" I found,

"I found, however, the next day, that there was every reaſon to believe her perfectly ſincere. She deplored her fatal infatuation, and gave me ſuch proofs of the villainous arts of her ſeducer, as though they could not exculpate her, greatly leſſened her crime. He had abandoned her in a foreign country, taking with him every thing he could obtain from her in money and jewels, under pretence of carrying on ſome of thoſe ſchemes which were to raiſe him to unbounded affluence; and on the ſame fallacious ideas had prevailed upon her to make over her annuity in ſuch a way, as that its alienation might be concealed from the perſons who paid it quarterly on my behalf.

"I have already been too minute. Let me, therefore, haſten to relate not my converſation with my ſon, or his ſubſequent interview with his mother; I muſt leave thoſe ſcenes to your imagination,

nation, ſince I have no power to dwell upon them. I took a ſmall but elegant detached houſe for that ill-fated woman, in a village four miles from London; whither, having diſcharged all her debts and her ſervant, and concealed her abode as much as poſſible by changing her name, ſhe removed. However convinced of her penitence, it never was my intention to ſee her after this arrangement; but I permitted my ſon to viſit her alone, and I took other means than by queſtioning him to aſſure myſelf of the propriety of her conduct.

"Having, therefore, ſatisfied myſelf in having done all that the duties of humanity required of me; and flattering myſelf that Frank, though ſtill very much diſpirited, had conquered the effects of the ſhock this occurrence had given him, I returned to conſider his future deſtination, and in about a fortnight named to him the neceſſity of his preparing

paring for Oxford. He changed countenance while I ſpoke, and, when I pauſed, ſaid, 'I have never yet diſobeyed my father, nor would I in any other inſtance for a thouſand worlds; but not even my fear of offending him, which I proteſt is little inferior to that of death itſelf, will induce me to go to Oxford.'

"I anxiouſly inquired the reaſon of a reſolution ſo extraordinary. He endeavoured to evade the queſtion; and when he found that was not to be done, he entreated me to aſk Mr. Warley.

"That worthy man, with every expreſſion of the trueſt concern, put into my hands a letter, which a day or two before my ſon had received from the woman who now bore my name, and was called my wife. It was to inform him, in the moſt bitter and ſarcaſtic words, that *my* infamous receſſion from her and from honour, to take back a harlot,

harlot, and ſet all decency at defiance, was well known; that her family (ſhe piqued herſelf upon her family) were about to obtain juſtice for her; but that in the mean time ſhe could not but congratulate him on the fortunate and creditable circumſtances under which he was about to begin his ſtudies at Oxford, where he might be aſſured the reſpectability of *both* his parents was already well known.

"Mr. Warley ſaw my lips tremble with rage, and heard, as I would have anſwered him, my voice inarticulate and choaked. He attempted, but in vain, to appeaſe me; the tumult, the agony of my ſoul, only increaſed by his remonſtrances. I called Heaven to witneſs, that the monſter (for woman I could not call her) who had thus endeavoured to wound me through my ſon, I would never again live with, never meet but with the purpoſe of parting with her for ever! My poor unhappy boy entered

tered my apartment at that moment, and his countenance had inſtantaneouſly the effect of reſtoring me to ſome command over myſelf. I ſaw, that while it was neceſſary to check the expreſſions of that pain this inhuman conduct had inflicted, I ſhould yet hurt him, if I appeared not to feel it acutely. Affected in a manner of which it is impoſſible to convey an idea to another, by the look, the manner, the ſilent miſery of my ſon, I was compelled to ſhorten our converſation; and leaving him with Mr. Warley, who had always great influence over his mind, I went out under pretence of buſineſs that admitted of no delay, and took my way to the Park, which was only at the end of the ſtreet, in hopes that the air and a ſhort conference with myſelf would abate the perturbation of my mind, which now was hardly ſhort of phrenſy.

"After ſome hours I became calmer; for I had now formed a plan for ſecuring,

ing, as far as it might yet be done, my own tranquillity in another country—after having provided in this, for the ſupport of the poor penitent, who, though no longer my wife, depended for her ſubſiſtence on me, and left Mrs. Maynard and her daughter in ſuch a ſituation, as to pecuniary concerns, as ſhould on her part preclude every juſt complaint, I determined that I would accompany my ſon to purſue his ſtudies at Lauſanne, at that time much frequented for the purpoſes of education: and I flattered myſelf that his mind would gradually regain its tranquillity; that his youth, and facility which all innocent and rational pleaſures might there be enjoyed, together with his being removed from the ſcenes where he had ſo cruelly ſuffered, and from the intercourſe of all thoſe in whoſe opinion he conceived himſelf diſgraced, would give another turn to his thoughts, and reſtore him to me ſuch as my exceſſive affection

affection for him had from his infancy repreſented to me that he would one day be.

" This plan, which, the longer I conſidered it, offered new advantages, ſerved to tranquillize my mind for ſome days, though I ſaw that my poor Frank became more and more melancholy and reſerved. I ſpoke to him of my project. He acquieſced, but without the ſlighteſt appearance of being pleaſed. I even began the preparations for our journey, and ſent for the lawyers, whoſe advice was neceſſary to ſettle the diſpoſition of my fortune in my abſence. Frank ſaw all this going on without any remark: it ſeemed as if, too certain of being miſerable every where, he was indifferent as to place. I became, however, very uneaſy, and particularly when I obſerved, that on thoſe days when he had viſited his mother his dejection was viſibly increaſed. I had permitted him to ſee her once or twice a week; but I never

never went with him, or held any communication with her but by letters which he carried; and on theſe occaſions he went alone on horſeback, leſt his ſervants ſhould gueſs to whom thoſe viſits were paid.

"They were uſually made in a morning, and he returned to dreſs for dinner about four o'clock: but one day, when he had told me he was going thither, I waited dinner for him till five, till ſix, till ſeven. He came not. I began to be uneaſy, yet appeaſed my firſt inquietude by ſuppoſing, that as the ſpring was advancing, and the evening fine, he might have been induced to dine with his mother, and ride home by moonlight. Time however paſſed, and he was ſtill abſent. I could perceive that Mr. Warley's inquietude was as great as mine; and he propoſed to go himſelf to the village where we imagined he had been, to inquire what detained him. To this I eagerly agreed, and he went off inſtantly

inſtantly in a hired chaiſe. But when I had no one either to hear my conjectures, or offer others, I became more intolerably wretched, and utterly unable to ſupport the apprehenſions that now every moment increaſed. I went down therefore with an intention to follow Warley; when, as I opened the door of my houſe, a poſt-chaiſe ſtopped before it. I ſprang forward, hoping to ſee my ſon. Gracious God! it was not Frank, it was his mother!

"She knew me by the light of the lamps, and, in a voice of ſuch wild fear as I cannot deſcribe, aſked me for him. 'Is my ſon here?—*is* he here?' In tenfold aſtoniſhment I anſwered, 'No: has he not been with you?'—'He was—he was with me;—but—ſome dreadful accident has happened. If you have not ſeen him—he is dead!—murdered!—I ſhall never, never behold him more!'

"I cannot tell you what I felt at that moment: an obſcure recollection of agony

agony is all that now remains on my mind. My ſervants, who ſoon aſſembled round the chaiſe, took out the half-frantic woman; and I had, after a moment, enough preſence of mind to entreat her to tell me what cauſe there was for the frightful apprehenſions ſhe entertained. With difficulty I underſtood, that Frank had, at her entreaty, as he was ſo ſoon to take a long farewell of her, dined with her; that they had afterwards walked out together for about a mile, and perceived that they were followed by a perſon who had the appearance of an officer. They turned. He paſſed them in a very rude and inſulting manner, and repeated the ſame inſolence twice before they returned to the houſe; ſo that it was with great difficulty ſhe could perſuade my ſon not to reſent it. She believed, however, that ſhe had prevailed; and flattering herſelf that after a while the ſtranger would go his way, ſhe detained Frank as long as ſhe could;

but

but that between ſeven and eight o'clock he went to the inn where he uſually put up his horſe, and, as ſhe imagined, had returned to me. At night, however, her maid, who bought milk at this inn, which was alſo a farm, came ſuddenly back, and told her miſtreſs, that the young gentleman who had dined there had had a quarrel with another whom he ſaw in the inn-yard; that after having, as the people told her, very high words, both had mounted their horſes and rode towards London together, for the purpoſe, as it was underſtood, of fighting a duel immediately on their arrival there. 'Who was the man?' cried I: 'Give me ſome means of finding him; it may not yet be too late.'—'None knew his name,' replied the miſerable mother; 'they knew only that he had been there two or three times aſking queſtions relative to me and to my ſon.'

"I muſt ſhorten the detail of ſcenes that kill me even in retroſpection. While

While I yet was conſidering whither I could go, or what I could do, and my ſervants were engaged in adminiſtering to the unhappy and ſelf-accuſed woman, a loud rapping at the door made me hurry down myſelf. Mr. Warley entered, and, graſping my hand, attempted to ſpeak, but could not. 'You have found him then?' cried I. He went into the parlour, ſunk into a chair, and I ſaw by the convulſive working of his features that he was endeavouring to acquire reſolution to give me a confirmation of my worſt fears. 'It is now,' ſaid he in a tremulous voice, 'the time when you are called upon to exert your fortitude. Your ſon——'

"'Is dead!—Is it ſo?'

"'Would to God I could ſay it was not! I have ſeen him—dead! I had not the ſatisfaction of receiving his laſt breath!'

"Whoſoever having human feelings has undergone ſuch a calamity as that

which now fell upon me, even when a long and hopeleſs illneſs has prepared them for it, will know how to imagine what were my ſufferings. To deſcribe them would be to attempt torturing you and myſelf. I was for ſome hours in a ſtate of diſtraction; and when exhauſted nature could endure theſe violent emotions of the mind no longer, I ſunk into inſenſibility; from which I was awakened only by the horror I felt at being told Mrs. Maynard and her daughter were in the houſe. There alſo had remained, becauſe ſhe was not in a condition to be moved, the moſt wretched of women and of mothers. With recollection, reſentment towards Mrs. Maynard returned; yet I did not then know that ſhe had levelled the inſtrument of death againſt the breaſt of my ſon.

"I peremptorily refuſed to ſee her, and ordered her and her daughter inſtantly to quit my houſe. It was with infinite difficulty, and not without applying

ing to ſome of her relations, that Mr. Warley prevailed on her to comply. I then learned the cauſe of the cruel event I deplored.

" Mrs. Maynard had heard that I had received back my firſt wife; that I had even taken her from a life of public proſtitution; and though ſhe was not yet eſtabliſhed at my houſe in London, that I ſupported her in ſplendour a few miles from it, where I, as well as my ſon, conſtantly viſited her. To aſcertain the truth of this, Mrs. Maynard could think of no better expedient than engaging her brother, Gordon Hamilton, a young man who had been ever ſince her marriage on foreign ſervice, to act at once as her ſpy and the avenger of her quarrel. He left my houſe in Dorſetſhire, where he had been deeply impreſſed with the ſuppoſed injuries of his ſiſter, and did not diſdain to employ perſons to watch what paſſed at my houſe in town. There they gained no intelli-

gence, but they ſet themſelves to follow both me and my ſon wherever we went. He was ſoon traced to the village where was the habitation of his mother; yet when Gordon Hamilton ſaw her, ſhe appeared to him too young to be the perſon of whom he was in ſearch. Not, however, to be deceived, he engaged in his next inquiry an acquaintance of his to accompany him, who had known the unfortunate Fanny during the time ſhe had been avowedly living on the wages of infamy. This man, profligate, unprincipled, and unfeeling, immediately acknowledged, and, having followed her on one of her ſolitary walks, had inſultingly accoſted her. Hamilton having then no farther doubts had waited from day to day about the village, meaning to accoſt me or my ſon. I never went thither, and he was ſoon tired of expecting me. Yet was he not at all convinced that any part of what his ſiſter had heard was exaggerated; and

and on receiving a letter from her, reproaching him with the coldneſs and indifference with which he bore the cruel affront my conduct was to his family, he had called at my door, inquiring for me; when the ſervant, an ignorant boy, whom he queſtioned, and who had received general orders to deny me, had told him I was gone out of town; and on his aſking if it was to Beckenham, the village where the object of his jealouſy reſided, the boy anſwered 'Yes,' merely to be diſmiſſed from his eager importunity. Thither, therefore, the hot-headed ruffian hurried, and, miſſing me, had followed and inſulted my ſon when walking with his mother; then repairing to the inn, he waited till Frank was mounting his horſe to return to town; when he went up to him, and after a few words they went together into a field, where my ſon was ſeen to ſtrike the other —when the people of the inn-yard interfered, and ſeparated them, but ſenſeleſsly

ſuffered them to depart together for London. They repaired to a tavern, from whence Hamilton went for his piſtols. They fought; and my unhappy ſon fell, and died upon the ſpot. His murderer inſtantly abſconded.

"The body of my poor boy was brought to my houſe, and three days had elapſed before I was capable of hearing theſe particulars, or of giving any orders. With returning reaſon all the horrors of my deſtiny ruſhed upon my mind. I had loſt the only being that had animated my exiſtence, the ſole object of my care and tenderneſs; and after years in which his delicate health had kept me in conſtant ſolicitude, he was ſnatched from me by the act of a vindictive monſter, at the very period when his virtues and his affection were to repay me for all the ſufferings of my preceding life.

"Oh! how cruelly to me was aggravated the anguiſh of the parent bending

ing over the cold remains of an only child, when I reflected on the character of him whom I had loſt, and the circumſtances with which his loſs was attended! I have dwelt on this cruel period already too long. I feel even at this diſtance of time, that it is impoſſible for me to proceed without ſuffering again all the horrors of the moment. Vengeance alone occupied my mind as ſoon as I could think ſteadily, and I determined to purſue over the world the villain who had deſtroyed me; but my taſk, before I could ſet out to gratify the only ſentiment I now felt, was not ended. The poor unhappy mother of my loſt ſon, heart-ſtruck, and overwhelmed at once by grief and remorſe, was ſinking faſt into the grave. If I could have forgotten how very dear ſhe once was to me, it was impoſſible that her being the mother of him I deplored could for a moment eſcape my memory; and I ſeemed to be fulfilling his laſt

wiſhes, while I ſought with the tenderneſs of a brother to ſoothe and conſole her. Yet the ſight of her ſerved but to deepen my anguiſh; and often when I have tried to aſſume before her ſome degree of fortitude, I have only mingled my tears and groans with hers, and each has aggravated the ſufferings of the other. The unfortunate woman lingered almoſt two months, and then died in my arms.

"The miſery that had fallen upon me; the death of her whom ſhe conſidered her rival; nothing ſeemed to appeaſe the deep and inveterate hatred of the woman who now bore my name. She attempted to force herſelf and her daughter into my preſence; but ſuch were my dread and abhorrence of her, that I know not to what unmanly and ſavage exceſſes the ſight of her might have tranſported me; and while I conſidered that the little girl was hers, and would by my ſon's death ſucceed to my whole fortune,

tune, unleſs I otherwiſe diſpoſed of it, I ſent for a lawyer, and, having made a proviſion of five hundred a year for the child, gave all the reſt of my property in caſe of my death to one of my friends. Having made this arrangement, I haſtened to Hamburgh, whither I was told the duelliſt or rather murderer had gone, to wait the ſucceſs of thoſe efforts his friends were making to obtain leave for him to return to Scotland, where he imagined he ſhould be ſo protected that I ſhould be compelled to drop all attempts to avenge the death of my ſon.—And certainly my conduct towards his ſiſter, and the provocation that had been given him, were ſo miſrepreſented, that almoſt all of thoſe who were once my friends, had learned to conſider me as one of the worſt of mankind; and ſuch was the indignation which Mrs. Maynard's ſtory had raiſed againſt me, among what is called the generality of the world, that, had I been diſpoſed to have ſhown my-

ſelf in public (which you will eaſily believe was far from my intention,) I ſhould have incurred ſome hazard of perſonal inſult. Such is the perverted ſtate of ſociety, (and that it was ſuch has been, among many, one reaſon of my flying from it,) that I am ſure nothing is more welcome to nine people out of ten, than to be told that a man or woman whom they either happen to know, or who is generally known, has been guilty of ſome crime for which they deſerve to ſuffer by the public executioner. The avidity with which tales of defamation are received and propagated, the little ſatisfaction with which any one relates or appreciates honourable actions or meritorous conduct, has been one of thoſe remarks that have moſt painfully convinced me of the depravity of my ſpecies. Rouſſeau was, towards the end of his life, undoubtedly inſane—at leaſt, ſo he appears to us even according to the account he has left of himſelf—yet who can ſay that many

many of the injuries which affected him to the derangement of his reaſon, exiſted only in his own morbid imagination? Almighty and all-wiſe Creator and Judge of the Univerſe! is it thou that permitteſt thy rational creatures morally and phyſically to wound and deſtroy each other? and is man endowed with ſpeech, only to become more fatal to his fellow than the lurking reptile or the prowling ſavage of the tropical regions?

"You will not wonder, though I knew not all the clamour which was raiſed againſt me, that I knew enough to determine me never to return to London, or to aſſociate any where with thoſe whom I had formerly been acquainted with. My moſt immediate purpoſe, however, was to find the perſon who had robbed me of the being in whoſe life mine was wrapped—and as ſoon as I was able I haſtened to the Continent.

"No ſuch perſon as he of whom I

was in ſearch was to be found at Hamburgh or Altona, where I had been taught to look for him; and after a long ſearch I aſcertained, that Hamilton, being now emancipated from his father's authority, who had been dead two years, and doubting the poſſibility of his return to England, had ſold his commiſſion under the King of his native country, and entered into the ſervice of the Emperor of Germany; in conſequence of which he had about a month before been ordered into Bohemia. I followed him from place to place, and was within a few days, and then within a few hours, of coming up with his detachment. This intelligence quickened my ſpeed. I arrived at Prague, where the regiment was, as I underſtood, to be ſtationed; and..... I learned that Hamilton had that very morning fallen in a duel with one of the officers of the detachment, in conſequence of ſome contemptuous treatment which the German conceived himſelf

ſelf to have received from Hamilton. The aggreſſor then was puniſhed by other hands than mine, and fell for an injury that was ſurely not by a million of degrees equal to that *I* had ſuſtained from him. He was already among the dead, and I had been denied the opportunity of ſaying to him, 'Thus didſt thou——' Yet vengeance is a paſſion which is ſoon deadened in a generous mind. The wretched being whom I had purſued could not have reſtored to me my murdered child; and after a while I ceaſed to regret that he had died by other means.

"I had now no paſſion to ſatisfy: I was without hope of pleaſure and without purſuit of any other kind. My mind was all darkneſs and confuſion; and even the lurid flaſhes with which the deſire of vengeance had lit it up were extinguiſhed. Exiſtence became inſupportable to me. I was among a people whoſe writings ſeem expreſsly calculated

to

to promote ſuicide. Their books, even thoſe of amuſement, treat only of the effects of the moſt violent paſſions, and the cataſtrophe is generally ſelf-murder. On this I had ſteadily determined—and lingered leſs from unwillingneſs to quit a world of which I had ſo much reaſon to be weary, than to *feel* my own determination, and to know that the life I abhorred, it was always in my power to ſhake off. At this moment the friend to whom I had bequeathed the bulk of my fortune, and who had been in the Weſt Indies during the laſt three years, ſuddenly appeared at Prague, whither he had followed me from England. I need not deſcribe to you the power which the voice of a friend has over him who has yielded his whole heart to the torpor of deſpair. I could not altogether cloſe mine againſt the zeal and the affection of a man, whom I had eſteemed and loved from my infancy. I forbear to repeat the arguments with which

which he gradually won me from my gloomy purpoſe. I conſented to travel with him, and we wandered round Europe, and viſited parts of it little frequented by the Engliſh. But on me change of place failed to have loſt its uſual effect. The cruel recollection of paſt wretchedneſs purſued me every where, and I found it impoſſible to obtain enjoyment in ſcenes where I had fondly projected travelling with my beloved boy, and where his pale image, ſuch as I had beheld when I took my laſt farewell, and conſigned him to he earth, was for ever preſent to my mind, whatever was paſſing before my eyes. My friend, however, would not appear to be diſcouraged. He perſevered in thoſe quietyet generous efforts, which, judging of me from the generality of mankind, would, he hoped, aided by the great ſoother of ſorrow Time, reconcile me to life, and inſenſibly reſtore me to its enjoyment.

In

joyment. In the midſt of theſe noble exertions of the moſt honourable and diſintereſted friendſhip, he was ſeized with a fever at Rome, where, as he ſaw that place had rather more excited my curioſity than any other we had viſited, he had prolonged our ſtay at the ſeaſon of the *mal-aria*, when it is deſerted even by the natives who poſſeſs the means of removal.

"I need not tell you with what ſolicitude I attended the ſick-bed of a friend who had done ſo much for me. His danger incurred for me, and the anguiſh it gave me, convinced me I had ſomething ſtill to loſe. I could not ſave him! *He* too died! He died, and left me alone in the world, which did not now contain one being intereſted for me, or for whom I felt any intereſt.

"I attended the body of my dead friend to England: that ſeemed to be the only duty I now had to fulfil on earth. I ſaw his remains depoſited with

thoſe

thoſe of his anceſtors; for, though he had very conſiderable property in Jamaica, he was the laſt of an ancient Engliſh family. I was his executor; and endeavouring moſt ſtrictly to perform the directions given in his will, I remained ſome time at his family-houſe, ſorting his papers, and deſtroying ſuch as I knew he would not chooſe ſhould be inſpected by his heirs, to whom he was almoſt a ſtranger. Among theſe I found many manuſcripts, as well as printed tracts, on the condition of the Africans and their ſtate of ſlavery in the American colonies. Accuſtomed to conſider theſe people as part of the eſtates to which they belonged, I had never properly reflected on this ſubject before; and when I now thought of it, I was amazed at the indifference with which I had looked on and been a party in oppreſſion, from which all the ſentiments of my heart revolted.

"Determined no longer to indulge this guilty

guilty apathy, I found I had now an object which was not unworthy of engaging the thoughts of a reasonable being. As a considerable proprietor, I had I supposed the means of doing some good to this miserable race; and to do them good I devoted myself with all of that mind and of those powers which my own unexampled miseries had left me.

"For this purpose I repaired to this island. Let me not dwell on what followed. If I was disgusted with the mere representation of scenes which I had never witnessed since I had made use my reason, I found the reality of oppression, in which I was myself a party, utterly insupportable. But my endeavours at reformation were not only considered as the idle dreams of a visionary, but as being dangerous to the welfare of the island. I was not easily deterred by apprehensions of personal inconvenience, and I persevered, till the examples I gave of lenity to and emancipation

cipation of the negroes became ſo much circumſtances of fear, that there was, I underſtood, a reſolution taken to confine me as a lunatic; and my brother, the man born of the ſame parents, who had from my infancy been my enemy, was to be put in poſſeſſion of my eſtates. In a government remote from that of the parent ſtate, intrigue does every thing, and equity has as little to do as reaſon. The party againſt me increaſed every day in numbers and in acrimony. My ſeat in the council I had long ſince reſigned, and I was accuſed of fomenting the diſcontents among the black people, and of having communicated with the Maroons. In a word, my ſituation became extremely uneaſy to myſelf, and worſe than uſeleſs to the unhappy people whoſe condition it had been my purpoſe to ameliorate; for greater ſeverities were often exerciſed on thoſe in whoſe favour I had

had interfered, than if I had never pleaded for them the cauſe of humanity.

"Repulſed, therefore, from my purpoſe, and diſguſted with every ſyſtem I had ſeen, I reſolved to retire wholly from the world, and hide myſelf from the ſpectacle of human miſery which every where empoiſoned the ſcenes of nature, and made me abhor the ſpecies to which I belonged. As to give freedom to the people who were conſidered as part of my eſtate was not poſſible, and I knew, if the plans of my enemies ſucceeded, that they would fall into the power of my brother, who was reckoned the moſt ſevere and unfeeling man in the iſland, I determined to let my property on ſhort leaſes, with a reſervation as to the work to be impoſed on the people, and liberty frequently to inſpect them. Far from making one of them ſubſervient even to my particular convenience, I did not keep a ſervant about my perſon,

ſon, but, conveying a few neceſſaries to the excavated rock among the mountains, took up my abode wholly there; a very few of the ſupplies of artificial life being ſufficient for me, and thoſe few eaſily to be obtained from perſons whom I could engage among thoſe who had been formerly in my ſervice.

"The inſurrection among the people of colour, which had been long frequent, and only partially and for a time ſuppreſſed, now raged with more dangerous violence: but at that time, I mean on my firſt retiring to my ſolitude, their deſire of vengeance towards Europeans was ſo far from being blindly indiſcriminate, that, alone and defenceleſs as I was, I became the object of their reſpect and even affection; and the only danger I have incurred has been from my own countrymen, and among them thoſe of my own rank; for they have more than once attempted to impriſon me, under pretence that I have choſen

choſen ſuch an unuſual reſidence for the purpoſe of intriguing with the inſurgents and fugitives, and abetting them in their ſanguinary purpoſes againſt the landed proprietors of the iſland. As not the ſhadow of proof could be brought againſt me, but as it was on the other hand made evident that I had, on more than one occaſion, thrown myſelf among them, reſtrained their violence, and induced them to return peaceably to their abodes in the mountains; theſe attempts and others, made at the inſtigation of my unhappy brother to prove me a lunatic, from my eccentric manner of life, have hitherto failed."

"'They may not always fail,' ſaid I to my unhappy and ſingular protector; 'they may not always fail, for malice irritated by avarice is hardly ever weary: and you ſee, that the continued outrages of theſe unhappy people render even the ſuſpicion of wiſhing them leſs wretched, a crime which

which may involve in very ſerious embarraſſment thoſe who are ſuſpected. You have now met one relation, who, though none can make you amends for the cruel loſſes you have ſuſtained, will find the greateſt pleaſure of *her* life in contributing to the comfort of yours. Need I add, that the delight of mine will be to aſſiſt her in paying this debt of gratitude, duty, and affection?'

"'I expected this propoſal from you, Denbigh,' replied Mr. Maynard; 'and if any thing in the world could re-animate my ſad heart, and give any value to my exiſtence, it would be to ſee Henrietta and you happy: but, wounded as I have been, believe me, it is only in perfect ſolitude I find life ſupportable. As to danger from thoſe who call themſelves my enemies, I deſpiſe it: and, alas! Denbigh! where will he who ventures to diſſent from eſtabliſhed prejudices, and to controvert the maxims of policy which the tyranny of cuſtom has eſtabliſhed,

bliſhed, that the ſtrong may trample on the weak—where, I ſay, will he who dares do this, go and not find enemies?—My brother, unhappy man! has paid the forfeit of his violence and his crimes; and for the reſt of the people in power here, who have no motive for their enmity, but becauſe I dare not act againſt my conſcience as they do, I fear them as little as I love them. Fear! do *I* name fear? I who have ſuſtained in my own perſon every degree of miſery, and who have yet had courage to live? No, Denbigh! He who has learned as I have done to ſuffer has nothing more to dread!'

"I found,' reſumed Denbigh, by the vehemence of his manner, that this was not a moment to preſs on my friend my wiſhes that he would renounce his ſolitary manner of life. In a ſolemn and lower tone of voice he again ſpoke:

"'For what, my friend, ſhould I return into the world?—For domeſtic happineſs?—Ah! no. However I may love

love Henrietta and you, and I believe I ſhould love you very much, nothing can reſtore to me the ſon I have loſt, and cruel recollection would force itſelf upon me in deſpite of all I could do to attach my mind to other objects; and to ſpeak ſincerely, it would ſeem almoſt a prophanation of my ſacred affection to his memory, were I to wean my mind from its habit of thinking continually on him. This may not be philoſophical, it may not be pious; but I am neither a ſtoic nor a divine. You muſt recollect too, that the woman who bears my name, and the daughter ſhe brought me, are, in my opinion, impediments to my return to England, which no inducement could engage me to conquer. Towards the child I could not do my duty ſo well as thoſe to whom ſhe is intruſted; and the mother I have ſworn never more to behold. The friend to whom I was the moſt attached is no more. A martyr to his affection for me,

he loſt his own life in the generous exertions he made to reſtore ſome value to mine. Would you have me ſeek in deſultory ſociety, in the common parties and purſuits of life, a remedy againſt the malady of the heart? All thoſe parties and purſuits I have tried, when I was more capable of enjoying them than I am now, and I know their value well.

"'Of the emptineſs and weariſomeneſs of what are called the pleaſures of the town, every man is probably ſenſible long before he is five-and-twenty, and I never had any enjoyment in field ſports: thoſe two reſources, therefore, afford me nothing with which I could beguile one hour of my remaining life. To me the gaming-table and the turf never preſented any thing but ſpectacles of ſtrange infatuation, ending almoſt certainly in repentance. In the converſation of men of letters I found, while I inhabited the world, the moſt amuſement; but, ſince certain events

which

which have long been foreſeen have intermingled politics with every diſcuſſion, the republic of letters is ſo diſturbed by party violence, and there is ſo much pedantry and pretence puffed by political favour into faſhion; while ſcurrility, diſgraceful to thoſe who think it can ſupport any cauſe, is ſo diſguſtingly frequent; and taſte is ſo totally annihilated by the blind virulence of mercenary writers, that I ſickened amidſt the ſocieties that once delighted me, and ſince I left England I believe all this has grown worſe. To ſuch, therefore, I ſhall never return. No, my dear Denbigh! leave me to the ſolitude which alone is ſoothing to my heart. It will be doubly dear to me, ſince my reſidence in it has been the means of ſaving and ſerving you and Henrietta. Do not imagine that I ſhall ever forget you. Amidſt the awful ſtillneſs of the night, when, leaving my ſleepleſs bed, I frequently wander forth, and, gazing on the

planets above me, ask of the Divine Omnipotence that pervades all nature, why he has placed me in a world where only anguish has been my portion, I will try to believe that evil, however heavily it has fallen on me, is only partial, and that good and happiness predominate in the general system. I will carry my imagination to you and Henrietta; and there will yet be in the world two beings on whom I can think with pleasure; but I will not by being with you shade your felicity with my gloom, or suffer your society to become necessary to me. I can here only indulge the habit of my mind without intruding on others; and as to the apprehensions you entertain of personal danger from the Maroons, believe me, Denbigh, these men, whom we call savages, have neither the blindness nor the ingratitude of the polished Europeans; and they will not injure him who has been, as far as his power extended, their benefactor.

benefactor. But were it otherwiſe, is it for me to fear death? for me, whoſe only gratification it is to converſe in idea with the dead?

" ' Start not, my friend, but hear me. Such is my weakneſs, that I delight in imagining the ſpirit of " my brave!*, my beautiful!" reviſits me. It may impreſs you with apprehenſions of my inſanity; but it will not excite *your* ridicule, if I repeat, " *that when I lie down to reſt and the moon looks into my cave* †," his ſhade often ſtands before me; the air ſighs among the boughs, and it is his voice; I look up to the ſtars, and behold in thoſe orbs of ethereal fire the habitations of ſouls ſo pure as his. But at other times ——No, I will not relate to you my darker reflections; yet even *they* are preferable to what thoſe that afflicted me in the world were, whenever a worthleſs or inſignificant young man, and I

* The tragedy of Douglas.

† Oſſian.

ſaw but too many of them, was obtruded on me, I felt all the cruelty of my deſtiny; and my mind, recurring to what he was, my loſt, my murdered boy! I have exclaimed, Wherefore ſhould *ſuch* an animal as that exiſt in high health, and my ſon be in his grave?

" Why ſhould a dog, a horſe, a rat, have life,
" And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more!
" Oh, never, never, never!*——

" 'From this deſcription of my feelings, which more than half the world would, I am well aware, call madneſs, you will judge, my friend, how unfit I am to return to a place in that world. It is among my rocks and trees, then, that I can indulge this weakneſs, if weakneſs it be; and there are times when I riſe above it. When, alone in my cavern amid the mountains, the night-ſtorm and land-wind threaten to diſmantle them of

* Shakſpeare.

their

their magnificent ſhades, and the rocks tremble to their centre; or, when I liſten to the heavy waves burſting againſt the northern cliffs of the iſland; when the clouds that bear the thunder are gathering around me, and afar off at ſea I mark the ſigns of an approaching tornado; then it is that I feel myſelf elevated, ſublimed above this earth, and partake in ſome degree of the beatitude of thoſe beings who dwell beyond the tempeſt and the earthquake. Diſengaged from all that binds others to this planet, I rather court than fear the phenomena, which are likely to detach me from it phyſically, as already I am morally emancipated.'

"'You will eaſily believe", continued Mr. Denbigh, "that after the cloſe of this converſation I deſiſted from any further attempts to prevail on my ſingular and unhappy benefactor to accompany us to England. I now return to the ſequel of my poor Henrietta's ter-

rific adventures, which I will repeat as nearly as I can in the firſt perſon, and in her own words."

The Story of Henrietta concluded.

"On the evening," ſaid my poor girl, "after I had written the laſt lines you have ſeen, my uneaſineſs was conſiderably increaſed by the appearance of Amponah, who ſeemed to be in the greateſt agitation and uneaſineſs. Yet when I urged him to ſay, whether my father was coming, or what was the cauſe of his being ſo much affected, his confuſion appeared to increaſe, and his anſwers, vague and contradictory as they were, ſtruck me with more terror than if the objects of my dread had been clearly defined. To the two moſt hideous cauſes of fear, the arrival of my father and Mr. Sawkins, and an attack of the Maroons on the plantation, he added a third,

third, by ſaying, that the Obi women had been in the woods employed on their ſpells, and they diſcovered that ſome great misfortune was about to happen to me, and would happen if I did not immediately leave the houſe and take ſhelter in ſome other place.

"I cannot convey an idea of the effect which all this, delivered in Amponah's ſtrange jargon, had on me. His wild looks; the intereſt he ſeemed to take in my ſafety, for which it appeared as if his fears were ſo great as almoſt to deprive him of his reaſon; all contributed to diſtract and diſtreſs me, while there was not another perſon in the houſe to whom I could communicate my apprehenſions, or of whom I could aſk advice. Gaſping for breath, I went to the window, and certainly heard noiſes enough among the woods and high lands, to confirm what Amponah had told me, that an immediate attack of the Maroons was to be feared. He aſſured

me too, that on more than one plantation, four or five miles off, the buildings and canes had been fired, and that to the ſouth-eaſt I might ſee the flames. He came in a few minutes afterwards, in apparently increaſed terror, to tell me, that he had juſt diſcovered that a much greater number of the people than he had at firſt ſuppoſed were not only diſaffected, but, irritated by the hard treatment they had received, waited only the arrival of their maſter, to wreak their vengeance more completely on his perſon than they could do on merely his property. Oh! think, my dear Denbigh! the effect that all this, which was indeed but too probable, muſt have on the mind of your poor Henrietta!

"I now for the firſt time thought of my father's preſence as deſirable, ſince I could not imagine that in ſuch an hour of peril he would perſiſt in concluding the deteſted marriage; but Amponah, who ſaw that I caught at this hope, aſ-

ſured me, that I might ſatisfy myſelf the preparations ſtill went on, and that a party of military were ſuppoſed to be on their way to meet my father, and protect him and his gueſts from every apprehenſion. Though this was a contradiction to ſome part of what he had told me before, the general impreſſion of terror on my mind prevented my attending to minute probabilities; and the negro girl, who now waited on me, ſaid all that was calculated to increaſe the agonies of fear which I ſuffered. On the other hand, Amponah, on whoſe faith and attachment I had the greateſt reliance, and who was I believed much more intelligent than the reſt of the negroes, propoſed to me to eſcape. He ſaid he could undertake to conduct me through the woods by a path ſo little known or frequented, that there would be no danger of my being met by any one, and that he would take a mule from the ſtable, and lead him round to a place

beyond the wood, from whence he could conduct me in safety to the house of a lady he named to me; and then go himself to Mrs. Apthorp, who was not far off, and who would, to use the man's phrase, 'be my good friend, and make peace with massa.' The scheme was plausible; my situation was desperate; and to deliberate was, I thought, to hazard irrecoverable misery. I decided then to trust myself to the guidance of Amponah that very evening. Yet such was my terror and reluctance that I should have shrunk from this dangerous confidence, even after I had agreed to give it, had not a negro arrived with intelligence, as he assured me, that my father and Mr. Sawkins, with the man of the church who was to perform the ceremony, were at the plantation of one of his friends, only eleven miles off, and would be at the house before the noon of the next day.

"As soon, therefore, as it was night, I crossed

croſſed the garden with trembling ſteps, and found Amponah waiting for me without. He had a brace of piſtols, and a dark lantern; and aſſured me, as falteringly I queſtioned him, that he had taken every precaution to ſecure my ſafety. It was ſoon too late to retreat, and, in a ſtate of mind not eaſy to be imagined, I followed his ſteps through the winding and rough path of a wood of cedar, and other large and ſhadowy trees, where it was ſoon totally dark, and even the ſilence of my conductor and his footſteps were now become objects of terror to me. I ſpoke to him. He ſaid we ſhould ſoon come to the place where he had left the mule; but there was ſomething in his manner that aggravated my apprehenſions. I thought he no longer ſpoke with his accuſtomed reſpect. He ſpoke as if he felt that I was in his power. I had declined taking his arm to aſſiſt me in walking; though I began to totter through fear and fatigue, for

the

the way ſeemed endleſs, and became more rugged at every ſtep. I was at length obliged to complain; for we had now paſſed what could not be leſs than two miles, ſtill going up or deſcending among the woods. Juſt as I declared my doubts of being able to go any further, we were in a ſort of ravine formed by torrents of water in the rainy ſeaſon, over which a large tree was thrown to facilitate the paſſage when the torrent raged beneath. Here it was abſolutely neceſſary for me to ſuffer Amponah to aſſiſt me; he almoſt carried me in his arms acroſs. When we reached the oppoſite bank, I diſengaged myſelf from his hold; and aſſuming the manner which I felt to be neceſſary, though my heart ſunk as I ſpoke, I ordered him to tell me exactly how much farther we had to go. Inſtead of a direct reply, the negro* turned towards me; and ſuddenly throw-

* What is here related is taken from a real event, though not happening under ſimilar circumſtances.

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ing the light of the lantern on his countenance, I ſaw his eyes roll, and his features aſſume an expreſſion which ſtill haunts my dreams, when fearful viſions of the paſt flit over my mind.

" He made a ſtep or two towards me. I recoiled, and, almoſt on the brink of the precipice we had juſt paſſed, no idea but that of throwing myſelf into it occurred to me when he thus ſpoke:

" ' Miſſy, I tell trute now—I love you. I no ſlave now; I *my* maſter and yours. Miſſy, there no difference now; you be my wife. I love you from a child! You live with me: nay, nay, no help for it; I take care of that.'

" Thus ſpeaking, he approached me, and all the horrors to which I ſaw myſelf liable were but too certain. Eſcape there was none; but the hollow we had paſſed was more than deep enough to have deſtroyed me in my fall; and ſtepping back as the wretch advanced, I ſeized a ſapling that grew on the edge of the

the excavated rock; by which I held, declaring to Amponah, with a degree of firmneſs at which I am now aſtoniſhed, that if he advanced another ſtep I would throw myſelf down the precipice and periſh. Truſting, however, to his ſtrength and my weakneſs, he was advancing, and I prepared for the dark and deſperate plunge, recommending my ſoul to the Being who gave it, when a volley of ſhot from I know not where levelled my aſſailant with the ground, and I fell half ſtunned, yet not inſenſible, at the foot of the tree to which I had clung.

"I was immediately ſurrounded by men of various ſhades of colour; negroes, maroons, quadroons, I knew not what. One among them, who was evidently their chief, advanced towards me, ſpoke to me in Engliſh, and, by his voice and manner, tried to re-aſſure me. All the recollection and preſence of mind I could command did not, however, ſerve to give me any confidence of ſafety. I

ſeemed

ſeemed to have been delivered from one evil, only to have fallen into another. The noiſes, the geſtures, the eager manner of theſe ſtrange people filled me with terror and diſmay. The Maroon, however, who commanded them, and to whom they gave the title of *General*, appeared to have not only more authority but to be more humanized than the reſt. To *him*, therefore, with a degree of reſolution which now excites my ſurpriſe, I addreſſed myſelf. I told him who I was, and the cauſe which had compelled me to leave my father's houſe, and put myſelf into the guidance of one of the negroes. The general, for ſo I muſt diſtinguiſh him, received this information as not being new to him. He ſaid what he thought might tend to conſole me, though it had a very contrary effect; and ordering his men to cut down ſome boughs, and make a ſort of litter, which they effected in a few moments, I was placed in it; and the general walking by my

ſide

ſide with a piſtol in his hand, they began to aſcend the mountain, near whoſe baſe I was when this meeting happened. All this paſſed by the light of torches, which had been produced and lit a moment after the appearance of this party of people.

"Denbigh! I will not attempt to convey to you an idea of what paſſed in my mind during this fearful hour; for it was at leaſt that before the cavalcade, of which I was ſo miſerable as to form the principal object, arrived at the place I ſhall afterwards deſcribe. At the moment I was deprived of all ſenſe and reſolution; for a number of women came out from a dark cavern overhung with wood, to meet the perſons they had all the night been expecting. Their clamours and ſtrange noiſes were ſufficient to have alarmed me: but, judge of my conſternation when I learned, by an harangue from the general himſelf, which he delivered with an air of authority, as

he

he commanded them to lift me from the litter, that he had in the woods reſcued a beautiful white woman from a negro, and had brought her to be added to the number of his wives. He, therefore, as he was obliged to go out again for ſome hours, directed them to take great care of me, and cauſe me to take refreſhment, and induce me to conſider myſelf as one of their number at his return.

"Overcome with the variety of horrors I had undergone, my mind could no longer reſiſt perſonal fatigue; and when two or three wild-looking female dark faces advanced, and, taking me up among them, carried me into the cavern; I no longer knew what happened, but ſunk into total inſenſibility; having only preſerved my recollection long enough to know that the men, after calling for a ſupply of drink, again diſappeared; a circumſtance which would have leſſened my terror, if the aſpect of the women,

and

and the orders I heard given, had left me any power to argue with my fears.

"I remained many hours incapable of reflection, and then recovered from this half-conscious state, in which all I seemed to know was, that something very dreadful had befallen me, when to my opening eyes objects presented themselves which I shall never forget.

"I was lying on the ground on a parcel of those blue and white rugs of cotton woven and dyed by the negroes. Above me, I saw the high rough arch of a rocky cavern; to which light was admitted only by the entrance at some distance, half obscured by foliage, and the evening was approaching. I raised myself on my elbow, and looked around me. I saw, at the entrance of the cavern, a group of negro and mulatto children; and near them, a little within it, three negresses or mulattos. One of the children observed me move, and exclaiming, 'Buckra, buckra, live!' the oldest

oldeſt of the women turned and came towards me. I never beheld ſo hideous, ſo diſguſting a creature; and ſuch was the dread with which I was inſpired as ſhe hung over me, that I was once more on the point of loſing my miſery in inſenſibility.

"The fearful wretch ſeemed, however, to expreſs a ſtrange ſort of ſatisfaction in ſeeing me revive. She beckoned to another who did not appear equally delighted, and bade her, as I underſtood by her ſigns, bring her ſomething for me from another part of the cavern. This negreſs was a fat and heavy creature, her neck and arms ornamented with beads, ſtrung ſeeds, and pieces of mother of pearl; and though there was an affectation of European dreſs, ſhe was half naked, and her frightful boſom loaded with finery was diſplayed moſt diſguſtingly. Reluctantly, and eyeing me malignantly, ſhe reached what the old woman demanded, and then, with

with an expreſſion it is not eaſy to deſcribe, withdrew, and ſeemed, as did her companion, anxiouſly to liſten at the entrance of the cavern.

" The elder woman now offered me ſomething in a cocoa-nut ſhell, which I put by, for I thought it impoſſible for me to ſwallow. But I ſoon found I had no choice. The menacing attitude and countenance aſſumed by the ſorcereſs terrified me into immediate ſubmiſſion; and while ſhe ſtood chattering over me, I forced myſelf to take what ſhe held; which was, I believe, rum mixed with goat's milk. I prayed, as well as the confuſed and ſtunned ſtate of my mind would permit me to pray, that it might be ſomething which ſhould ſpeedily end my wretched exiſtence. The third of the women was a mulatto, younger and leſs terrific to my imagination than the others: but her diſpoſition ſeemed to differ in nothing from the fat negreſs; for, approaching me, as I had again laid

myſelf

myſelf down, and hid my face with one of my hands, ſhe pointed out to her companions the bracelets I had on my wriſts, which, together with a pair of ſmall gold ear-rings, and a picture of my aunt tied to a riband round my neck, were all my ornaments. Theſe they took away, and divided, I imagine, between them. The elder, ſoon after returning, took off my pockets, in which there were two ſmelling-bottles, a pocket-book, and an inlaid tooth-pick caſe. Theſe things were ſet in gold; of which they ſeemed to know the value, and to be mightily delighted with them. My clothes were next examined; and a petticoat of fine muſlin and a cloak of the ſame, in which I had been wrapped, were appropriated without ceremony; but my upper garment, which was a dark chintz, ſeemed not to tempt them, and they left me in poſſeſſion of it.

"The old woman, who was, as I afterwards found, the general's mother, oppoſed

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poſed this plunder of my trinkets and clothes with all her power; but the other two, who were his wives, ſeemed to hold her authority in contempt. After a time, the two who were the general's wives went out together. The old woman remained, and, after offering me every thing ſhe thought would moſt completely anſwer the directions ſhe had received from her ſon, of which I rejected the greater part, ſhe went to her bed, as I imagined, in another cave, or at leaſt in another and diſtant part of that where I was.

"The children too, who had ſurrounded her, were all gone to the places where they ſlept, and the cavern became ſilent. I heard nothing but the ſighing of the wind without, and ſo perfect was the ſtillneſs, that I fancied it poſſible I might eſcape; but, perhaps, only the exhauſted ſtate in which I was, the weakneſs of my body affecting my judgment, could have induced me to form ſuch

ſuch a ſcheme. I aroſe, however, and creeping with difficulty to the entrance of the cavern, I looked around me in a ſtate of mind ſo confuſed and bewildered, that I cannot now diſtinctly relate what I then felt. The ſky above me was illuminated with myriads of ſtars. There was that peculiar clearneſs and luſtre in the blue arch where they ſparkled, that is ſeen only in theſe regions. My ſpirits were revived: I breathed more freely, and my ſoul once more reſuming its powers, I was able to ſupplicate Heaven for mercy and deliverance.

" As if the great Governor of the Univerſe had heard me it was already at hand. I ſaw, coming from the aſcent among the trees, two female figures, in whom I ſoon recognized the general's two wives. The younger of them immediately approached me.

"She inquired of me in a language which my ſolicitude to comprehend her,

taught me to understand whether it was not contrary to my wishes that I was where I now found myself.

"I answered, that it was most undoubtedly so, and that there was nothing I would not do to acquit myself of the obligation I should owe to the person who would deliver me from it.

"After a short conversation, I found that this woman, long the favourite sultana of the Maroon chief, had no inclination to have another rival in his favour; and that, after a consultation with the other woman, who joined in the desire to appropriate this hero of the hills to themselves, the younger, who called herself Mimba Qua, had resolved to try my disposition to depart, or if I had shewn no such disposition, to murder me!—for though she did not say so, I perceived that such was the resolution these rival ladies had taken.

"My agonizing eagerness to escape, however, was too unequivocal to leave them

them a moment's doubt of my ſincerity. There was not a ſecond of time to loſe. The negreſs undertook to watch the old woman; the mulatto, to conduct me. My fears lent me ſtrength. I followed, or was led by my conductreſs to the hermitage, whoſe inhabitant I have ſince found was my uncle! I will not attempt to deſcribe my reception. You have ſeen him, you have heard him, and may imagine how ſuch a man received, at the riſk of his ſafety and life, a wretched young woman, of his own colour and nation, though he did not then know ſhe was the daughter of his brother.

"What happened at the cave of the Maroons, how the women contrived to divert the ſuſpicions, or appeaſe the anger of the general, or whether ſome attack of the troops ſent againſt them prevented any purſuit, I had no means of aſcertaining. I only know, that after remaining two days in my uncle's

wild abode, a ſtay which greatly reſtored my ſtrength, Providence in its mercy conducted you, my dear Denbigh! thither, and what followed I need not relate."

Here my friend Denbigh concluded the narrative of his wife's ſufferings. They were married immediately, the governor ſerving Henrietta as a father at the ceremony; they embarked as ſoon as poſſible afterwards for England, where they have now been a few weeks only, and Denbigh is looking out for the purchaſe of an eſtate in England, having diveſted himſelf, though at ſome loſs, of all his property on the other ſide the Atlantic.

Here then, my friends, the eventful hiſtory cloſes. Of me you will hear farther from another country perhaps; for I meditate an excurſion, of which I will not mention the particulars, be-

cauſe

cauſe I have not quite decided upon them in my own mind, and know that at all events they will be too eccentric to obtain at leaſt in the proſpectus your approbation.

Adieu.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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